

AUGUST, 1958

AMAZING SCIENCE FICTION STORIES

VOL. 32 NO. 8

"PARAPSYCHE" By JACK VANCE

COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

# AMAZING

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By Dr. Arthur Barron

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"Security spokesmen ridiculed the idea that the breaking of a window pane, which can happen accidentally in any office, was necessarily evidence of flying saucers.

"Security Chief James F. Wakeford himself, wreathed in smiles, issued a personal statement. 'No one is more anxious than this Department to have a flying saucer on hand for examination,' he said. 'Unfortunately we do not have any. If we had one we would certainly not launch it through our windows—open or closed. This report reminds me of the well-known fish-

erman's tale of the one that got away. If only it could be produced, as concrete evidence . . .'"

Wakeford told no lies, but you can see that no one is going to believe those eye-witnesses—except Jim Bailey, Fred Buckman, the Security boys themselves, the General, the Air Commodore, the Admiral, and me.

*They won't talk. And if I do, what's the use?*

Without that scanner—without that one piece of incontestable, concrete evidence—who would believe me?

*Would you?*

**THE END**



"Are you sure this is Earth? Those natives look more like Saturnians."

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REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

AUGUST 1958

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## It Began With A Letter From The Russians—

—from the editors of a Russian science fiction magazine called *Znanie-Sila*. The letter began with: *Let's get acquainted*, and ended with: *We . . . do not know enough about American science fiction . . . so let's get to know each other better. We . . . shall publish the best American science fiction, while you can introduce young Americans to the science fiction of Soviet writers and scientists who contribute to our magazine. Will you accept our offer?*

Sure, why not? So we contacted the Russian Embassy in Washington and asked for details. We were given another number to call and the assurance that we would be cordially received. We called the number over a three-day period and finally raised a Washington housewife who was just back from spending a week with her mother in Cleveland. We called the Embassy again and they said they'd never heard of the number they gave us the first time, but here was a different one and long live science fiction. The second number bore fruit in the form of assurances from the man at the other end that Mr. Kurochkin was handling that bit and while he wasn't in at the moment, he'd call us back. We waited two days and called again. Mr. Kurochkin was out to lunch. Three days later (it was getting to be a habit now) we put in another call. The elusive Mr. Kurochkin was in Maryland. We were going to call again this morning, but over the week end there came the report that a Mr. Kurochkin had been requested (by U. S. authorities) to leave the country because of, we understood, some sort of illegal activity. Now, whether this Kurochkin was our boy or not, we don't know. Maybe that name is equivalent to Smith over here. And we'll never find out because the phone bill is getting too high.

So we tried to get you some Russian science fiction and while we didn't succeed, we hope you'll give us an A for effort.—  
PWF

# GARDEN OF EVIL

By HENRY SLESAR

ILLUSTRATOR FINLAY

---

*The job didn't look too difficult at first — rescuing two people lost in a forest. But what do you do in a place where trees are smarter than people?*

---

ORDINARILY," I said to the handsome woman with the interesting purse in her lap, "Ordinarily, Mrs. Jaderlund, our agency doesn't like to take cases almost twenty years old. The facts tend to get small and scattered, like confetti after a parade." I smiled at her.

She didn't smile back. Mrs. Jaderlund was on the favorable side of fifty, and she had ice in her eyes as well as on her wrists. But as I said, the purse was interesting. It looked like its contents might be promising, and the detective agency Jamey Wright and I operated was sorely in need of capital.

"However," I continued, "if



It was impossible!



Still, the forest was carrying the man away.



you've turned up some fresh evidence about your husband's whereabouts—"

"I have," she said. "That's why I'm here."

"Would you mind telling me why you picked us?"

She shrugged. "You seemed to be my only alternative. When I went to the police, they claimed the case was out of their jurisdiction now, and that I would have to take it up with the Interplanetary Authorities. Frankly, I didn't favor the idea of so much red tape. One of the police officials mentioned your company—I believe he called it Three Eyes."

"That's right," I grimaced. "But we don't much care for the nickname, Mrs. Jaderlund. Interplanetary Investigations Institute is the real name, and we're kind of proud of it."

"Really?" She looked around the seedy office.

"Our organization's unique. We're the only private investigators willing and able to operate on any of the seven occupied star systems. We have our own starship"—the plural was a cheat; we had one—"and we're prepared to fill any assignment in the known universe, as long as—" I stopped, and she said:

"As long as the client pays for it."

I grinned. "That's business, Mrs. Jaderlund. Now suppose we talk about *your* problem."

She opened that interesting purse and I craned for a look. All she brought forth was a

folded sheet of paper. I took it and read:

*Star system Generis, Planet MV-5: Atmosphere supportable to human life, but conditions of tropical nature have produced unliveable jungle topography. Leased to Anglo-American Botanical Society 2010, rights relinquished same year due to failure of first expedition. No important minerals. See: Abstracts of Planetary Investigations, Generis System, Court of Interstellar Records, 2108 A.D. for further reference.*

I looked up at her. "Was your husband a botanist, Mrs. Jaderlund?"

"No, a physicist, primarily."

"And your information is that he's on this—MV-5?"

"I can't tell you why I know this; it would implicate some important people in the government service. But I am certain of one thing. If he's still alive, my husband, Dr. Hugo Jaderlund, and my daughter, Pamela, are on Planet MV-5."

I leaned back in the swivel chair, and it squeaked.

"This botanical expedition twenty years ago. I understand the ship never returned. Yet you think your husband and child are there, living in an impossible jungle wilderness."

"Yes, I do."

"And you want Three Eyes—I mean, you want our organization to find them, bring them back?"

"That," Mrs. Jaderlund said,

with lowered lashes, "is exactly what I want you to do."

She left the office around four-thirty, after a conference that lasted more than three hours. I waited around, letting the room grow dark, until Jamey reported in. I knew he would come; we were both using the office as living quarters, and trying to hide the fact from the management of the building.

He strolled in at six-thirty, with a pleased look on his young, freckled face that I had learned to associate with amatory anticipation. He went straight to the closet and began rummaging around the shelves for toilet articles.

"Hey," I said.

"Huh?" He whirled, and grinned sheepishly. "Oh, hi, Chet. Didn't see you."

"I was waiting for you. You wouldn't be thinking of going out tonight?"

"As a matter of fact, I was. There's a little ballet-dancer named Cora—"

"You can pirouhette some other night," I said sourly. "This may come as a rude shock to you, but I think we got ourselves a client."

He almost fell over. "A what?"

"Client. You remember. One of those two-legged beings with money."

He came over and sat down, still holding a tube of toothpaste in his hand. I told him about Mrs. Jaderlund's visit.

"You mean this guy disappeared eighteen years ago? And we're supposed to find him now?"

"Him and his daughter, name of Pamela. He was a physicist, working on a top-level program, when he vanished from Mrs. Jaderlund's bed and board. And so had their daughter, who was only two years old at the time. Mrs. Jaderlund says she tried to locate them for years afterwards, but without success, but now she has solid information that placed him on MV-5."

"That crazy jungle planet?"

"That's the picture. She was pretty cozy about her source of information, and maybe I should have gotten upset about it. But then she put on a demonstration that piqued my interest."

"What kind of demonstration?"

"The folding kind," I said.

Jamey chewed his nails and looked worried.

"I dunno, Chet. If this botanical starship never made the landing—how can we?"

"That was twenty years ago. Ships weren't as good then. If anybody can squeeze us down on MV-5, Captain March can. And if Jaderlund got there—we can, too."

Jamey looked miserable.

"Cheer up," I said. "It's an honest-to-God adventure, isn't it? Stanley to Livingstone stuff, and for money. That's what you wanted, isn't it?"

"I'm not so sure now."

"Then I'll tell you what you

do. Get washed up and dressed and go see Cora. Tell her about your big case, and that you're off for the stars, and that this is good-bye. She'll fall all over you, I promise."

His face brightened.

"You know, that's not a bad idea."

The next day, I woke Captain Jonas March out of a sound sleep to tell him the news. I didn't mind waking him, because it was two in the afternoon. But I did mind the thick syllables of his response, because that meant the captain was drinking again. I told him we had two weeks to get the *Starwagon* in shape for the journey to MV-5, and he had better spend those weeks in sober effort. He made his usual vows.

The next five days kept me hopping. There was a lot of red tape that had to be untangled to make a star-journey, including seven different types of permits from the Interplanetary Authorities. But to tell you the truth, I was elated by the whole business.

Jamey wasn't. He had become so accustomed to being broke, living on the meager proceeds of divorce cases, sleeping in the office, that all his ambition seemed drained. He was only twenty-four, and I had taken him into the office less than a year ago, when he had casually walked in the door and offered three grand for a partnership. I thought he wanted adventure, but now I began to wonder.

At any rate, involved as our preparations were, somehow we muddled through. On a chilly morning in January, the starship was ready for blast-off, and Captain Jonas March, sober as he would ever be, was at the controls. Mrs. Jaderlund sent a wire to the spaceport, wishing us Godspeed, and Jamey's girl, Cora, came down to kiss him good-bye. But there was no festivity in the occasion for me. To be honest, there was nothing but an empty and inexplicable sense of dread.

The best that can be said about our two-month trip was that it was more eventful than most. Unfortunately, the events weren't the kind that made for peace and harmony. Captain March had managed to sneak a case of bourbon aboard past the sharp eyes of customs, and spent most of the trip in a red-faced, wheezing fog. Jamey, sullen and uncommunicative for the first two weeks, then turned bitter and argumentative. It was all I could do to keep my own balance, and to prevent our expedition from turning into a three-way brawl. But I was never so happy to approach landfall as I was the day MV-5 hovered in our ship's viewplate.

There was nothing awesome about the orange-green ball that spun lazily in its short orbit around the Generis sun. It was a planet about the size of our own Mercury, shrouded in an aurora that meant life-giving

air to Earth visitors. But as the globe enlarged in our sight, the thick, entangling vegetation that choked every inch of the terrain began to look like a formidable opponent. Maybe it was a good thing that Captain March was muddled by alcohol when landing time came; even the old veteran might have balked at making the attempt if he had been sober.

But we made our landing, in a clearing that couldn't have been more than four times the diameter of the ship itself, the greater part of it burned into the jungle by the *Starwagon's* fiery rockets. It was a masterful job, and we forgot our quarrels for the moment in our jubilation.

We made the usual safety checks before opening the airlocks, and everything seemed okay, but I insisted on space suits anyway when we first debarked.

Mrs. Jaderlund had been astonishingly specific about where we would locate the encampment of her husband and child. We set up our electronic Finding equipment beside the ship, and fixed our position. According to the result of our calculations, Dr. Jaderlund wasn't more than five or ten earth-miles from our landing field, but as we surveyed the incredibly dense jungle that ringed the *Starwagon*, those five or ten miles might have been a thousand.

"No use trying it now," I told Jamey. "Our best bet is to

bivouac here for the night and start fresh in the morning. We'll have to burn our way through that foliage."

"Anything you say," Jamey said, restored to cheerfulness.

We went back inside the ship and broke out some rations. There was one bottle left in the captain's smuggled case, and I broke my own rules and let him serve it around. We were feeling pretty good by the time the night closed in rapidly on the ship.

Then it started to get warm.

"What the hell," Captain March growled. "Hot as Mercury in here—"

"Something's wrong," Jamey said, going to the viewplate. "I can't see anything out there, but I can feel it."

"Too much bourbon," I said.

"No!" March got to his feet groggily. "Something wrong—"

He was proved right, and suddenly, by an event that startled us into a shout of surprise and fear. The viewplate glass shattered into jagged shards three inches thick, and a green tentacle thrust its way into the ship!

"Look out!" Jamey screamed.

I yanked at the gun strapped to my gear, and heard Captain March cursing. Then he fired his own weapon, and the concussion made the ship rock. I yelled at him to stop before he damaged the instruments.

"It's only a plant!" I shouted. "Put your gun down—"

We stopped, and watched in motionless horror as the green, sinuous arm roamed about the interior of the ship. Then it slithered out of the shattered viewplate again.

Jamey wiped his brow. "My God, what a thing! I could swear it was intelligent—"

"It was only a plant," I repeated, reassuringly. "The planet must be full of crazy plants, growing everywhere. Jamey—hand me that perma-lamp."

He tossed me the torch and I went to the viewplate. I turned on the powerful beam and gasped when I saw what had happened in the few hours since landfall. The clearing was gone completely; new foliage had sprung up until it was entangling the *Starwagon*, smothering the ship with vines and creepers!

I told the others the situation, and March, looking sober for the first time in two months, said:

"I say let's blast off."

"He's right," Jamey said uneasily. "We don't know the planet, Chet. We could be buried alive in this jungle; maybe that's what happened to the other ship—"

"We can't leave now. Jaderlund survived this, so why can't we? I say let's turn the heatthrower on the stuff, and see if we can burn our way through."

"Worth a try," March said.

We opened the air lock, and what looked like a green bomb exploded inside the ship. A

wriggling, churning mass of leaves and vines seemed to be poking a million clutching fingers towards us. I hoisted the heatthrower to shoulder level and pulled the trigger. The invisible waves of scorching heat sizzled out and burned a black hole through the unholy cluster of vegetation, curling it into shrivelled fragments and creating a rotten stench that almost stifled us.

"It works!" I said joyfully. "We can make our way through this stuff, if we can stand the stink. Then we'll latch onto Jaderlund and his daughter and get the hell out—"

"Look out!" Captain March screamed.

I whirled toward the air lock again, just in time to see the green juggernaut heading for us. A dozen tentacles, thick as cables and with sinister intelligence, reached for our bodies. March ran for the heatthrower, but before he could bring it to firing position, three of the tentacles were whipping around his body, choking off all movement and sound, strangling the breath from him. I reached for my gun, but I was too late. Behind me, I heard Jamey say a prayer to a God that didn't seem to know about Planet MV-5.

I woke up and said: "Only a nightmare . . ."

The recollection was vivid. I was being carried, lifted, moved from tentacle to tentacle, my body torn by sharp thorns,

my clothes ripped, my bones bruised . . .

But when I woke, I said, "Only a nightmare . . ." Because I was in a bed, and the bed was in a house, and there was a human face before mine.

"No," the girl said softly. "Not a nightmare. It was the forest."

I tried to sit up, without success. She touched my bare shoulder with her hand, and I slid back with a groan.

"Who are you?" I said. "Are you Pamela?"

She touched my cheek, lightly. "Different," she said. "You're so different. And he, too, the other one."

My eyes came into focus and I studied her. Did I expect to find Pamela a Goddess of this green world? In my mind, I had imagined our meeting many times, and I guess my romantic imagination had worked overtime. I kept visualizing her as beautiful, a stunning nature-child with long, sleek black hair, like her mother's, and eyes that burned as bright as a jungle cat's. But this Pamela had the simple sweetness of a school girl, with short, jaggedly-cut blonde hair, soft, gentle features, and eyes that were tenderly compelling. She wore something shapeless and green, woven of leaves, and scant enough to reveal that she was endowed with a superb young, lithe body.

I said: "Pamela, we've come to take you home."

"Home?"

"This is home," a voice said at the other side of my bed.

I shifted my body painfully towards the speaker. It was a tall bearded man, looming over me like some other-world Moses, and he returned my gaze sternly. "This is Pamela's home," he said again. "She hasn't any other. She wants no other."

"Listen, Dr. Jaderlund," I said, "we've come from your wife—"

"I don't wish to hear your reasons," the man said. He was dressed in the same entangled leafy green as his daughter. His bare arms were muscular, and his patriarchal face was browned and unlined. He looked far younger than the sixty years he would be now.

"Jamey," I said. "My friend. Is he all right?"

"Your friend is sleeping," Jaderlund said. "But I am afraid the third man, the eldest one, was unable to survive his ordeal. The forest brought his body to me, but I could do nothing to save him."

"The forest—brought him?"

"The forest obeys me," Jaderlund said. For a moment, I thought his hermit's life had ended in madness, but his eyes were steady and his tone was convincing. "When I first arrived here, the forest greeted me like some king it had been awaiting for centuries. I am its master, and it obeys my very thoughts. When I became aware

of your ship landing, I commanded it to bring the trespassers to me." His voice softened. "I am sorry about the third man; I had no desire to have him killed."

I managed to sit up and look around me. It was more a bower than a room, the ceiling overhead a rounded dome formed of woven vines. For the first time, I observed the second bed, with Jamey's unconscious body sprawled across it.

"I don't believe you," I said shakily. "A forest can't obey anyone—"

"This forest can," Jaderlund said. "This is my forest, my garden, my world. The vegetation lives, and obeys me in all things." He smiled at the girl. "It will obey my Pamela, too. What is your name?"

"Chet Walker."

"Let me prove myself, Mr. Walker."

He made a gesture towards the "walls" of the room. From the opaque foliage emerged four undulating tentacles, like those which had invaded our ship and taken us prisoner. They converged on the bed where Jamey lay helpless and slowly curled about his body. I started to get up and Jaderlund's strong hand restrained me. I watched, first in horror, and then in astonishment, as the tentacles gently lifted Jamey from the bed and held him suspended in the air.

I heard the girl whimper. "Don't hurt him, father."

"I will not hurt him, my dear."

He gestured again, and the cable-thick vines lowered Jamey to the bed once more. Throughout the experiment, my partner hadn't stirred.

"Now you must sleep," Jaderlund told me. "You must rest until you regain your strength. Then we will speak of your future."

He turned and walked straight for the wall of vines, his daughter behind him. The plants parted for them, and then sealed the room once more.

It was four days later (MV-5 days, the equivalent of 36 Earth-hours) that Dr. Jaderlund revealed to me the true purpose of his desertion. He had spent the intervening time in demonstrating the weird and fantastic vegetation which covered the planet, taking pleasure in my interest and amazement in the strange, intelligent botanical freaks which he could command by thought and gesture. I saw little of Pamela in that time; she and Jamey wandered off in exploratory journeys of their own. Dr. Jaderlund didn't seem to mind. In fact, he seemed to encourage it.

On the day he spoke of his wife, and the world he had left behind him, Jaderlund said:

"As you know, I was a physicist, working with the government on a military atomic project. I won't describe myself as a pacifist; I understood the

deadly purpose behind my work. But then I was assigned to an atom base called Indian Chief—"

"Indian Chief?" I said. "That was where the blast happened, wasn't it?"

Jaderlund nodded. "I was one of the three physicists in charge of operations. There was nothing I could have done to prevent the pile from blowing up; I didn't blame myself for what happened. But the effect on me was the same as overwhelming guilt. A hundred thousand lives—" His eyes went empty at the painful recollection.

"Something happened inside me that day," Jaderlund said. "If it wasn't for Pamela, our infant child, I think I might have ended my life. But it was for her sake that I decided to leave the insane world that had given us birth, to seek out a new home where such horrors didn't exist. I wanted Clara, my wife, to join us, of course. I wanted escape for my whole family. But Clara didn't understand my reasoning, she was too much with the world. She left me but one course—to kidnap my own daughter, and find a new home. I joined a starship expedition headed by an old friend and colleague, a botanist of the Anglo-American Society—"

"Then you *were* on that first ship?"

"Yes, Pamela and I were there. The starship crashed, and there were only four survivors. Fever took the others, but Pam-

ela and I remained, to discover that the forest had been awaiting the arrival of a master for centuries."

"But now what?" I said. "What will happen to you now, Dr. Jaderlund? And Pamela?"

"We will stay here forever, until our lives are done. But we will not be the last." His eyes looked beyond me. "I will leave a new world behind me, Mr. Walker. This is only the beginning of it. And just as in the beginning of the Earth, this will be the Garden . . ."

I looked about us at the incredible foliage.

"You can't be serious," I said. "You can't let your daughter remain here—"

"She is happy, Mr. Walker. Surely you can see that."

"Perhaps now. But someday—" I stopped. "Your daughter's still a child, Dr. Jaderlund. Someday, she'll be alone on MV-5, without your help and comfort. You must think of that. You must think ahead."

Jaderlund smiled. "I have thought of it often, Mr. Walker, and I knew providence would bring me my answer. It has."

He looked towards the wall of vines, and it parted to admit Pamela and Jamey. Their young faces were flushed, and they were just releasing their hands. I don't know why I felt such a surge of anger when I saw them, but I couldn't help myself. I whirled on Jaderlund and snapped:



"So that's the idea. An Adam for your Eve!"

"What's wrong?" Jamey said, coming up to us.

I glared at him, and then at Pamela. She lowered her lashes when she caught my angry eyes.

"Nothing," I said sourly. "Nothing at all."

It was another six days before I could be alone with Jamey. Dr. Jaderlund kept me by his side continuously, while Pamela and his chosen Adam roamed the jungle together like two children of nature. I grew more and more irritable as the days went by, and hated to admit to myself the true cause of my vexation. I knew that I was envious, jealous, angry at being excluded from Pamela's sight. But if there was one thing Jaderlund didn't want, it was rivalry within his Garden of Eden. So when I finally spoke alone to Jamey, my argument was unnaturally bitter.

"I tell you we've got to figure a plan," I said. "We can't go on like this, Jamey. This guy is obviously off his head."

"But what can we do about it? As long as this jungle does what he wants—"

"Then we've got to do something drastic. Our only hope is the girl—"

"Pamela?"

"She can make this crazy vegetation do tricks, too. If she can make them perform in our favor—"

"But she won't," Jamey said.

"She's loyal to her father, Chet, you know that."

"Then you've got to convince her otherwise. You've got to make her help us return to the ship, without her father interfering. Even if we can't bring back the old man, we can take her home."

Jamey looked thoughtful.

"Maybe you're right. Maybe she'd do it—for me."

His words made me squirm, but I controlled the anger I felt. Then we made our plan.

Two days later, we were ready to put it into action. It was a bold plan, and it wouldn't have worked except for Jaderlund's implicit trust in his daughter. Jamey pretended that he wished to show Pamela our starship, and bring forth supplies that would be offerings of love to her and her father. She agreed to the visit, but not so readily to the idea of bringing me along.

"Father wishes Mr. Walker to remain with him," she told Jamey. "I cannot disobey."

"Only for a few hours," Jamey said. "Mr. Walker will help me unload the supply locker, so we can bring back all the things I promised you."

"I will ask father," Pamela said.

"No, no! You'll spoil the surprise." He clutched her hand and smiled into her eyes. She blushed, and said:

"All right, then. But only for a few hours."

Our expedition was set for

that night, when Jaderlund would be asleep and unsuspecting. I lay awake on my bed, trying not to think the jealous thoughts that crowded into my brain, waiting for Pamela to command the walls of my prison to part.

Some hours later, I heard Jamey's whisper in my ear.

"We're ready," he said.

Pamela was standing in our room, a stunning silhouette in the night. She gestured us towards the archway of vines she had created with a gesture of her hand. I went out with him, the jungle opening a path before me.

Jamey squeezed Pamela's bare shoulders, and said: "Good girl!"

I knew what Moses must have felt as the Red Sea parted in walls of water beside him and the fleeing Israelites. The great overhanging leaves and vines of the forest divided as Pamela led us through the foliage. We walked for hours, until the Generis sun began to tint the sky overhead faintly orange, until we caught sight of the still-gleaming skin of the *Starwagon*. I could have shouted for joy when we approached it, and when Pamela commanded the entangling vines to release the starship from its leafy grip.

Jamey and I shared looks, and then I went inside. I made a rapid check of the controls, and found everything in working order. I was just making the last adjustment that would allow us

to fire rockets and escape MV-5 when Jamey brought the girl into the ship.

"It's so wonderful!" she breathed, touching the smooth surface of the bulkheads. "I have never seen such a thing."

"There's a lot you haven't seen," Jamey grinned. "But we'll take care of that, sweetie."

"All right, all right!" I snapped. "Let's get ready."

"Yes, we must hurry," Pamela said. "Father will be awake by now; he will be worried about us."

Jamey winked at me. "He can stop worrying now."

I went to the controls. My head was swimming, and my stomach was in knots. Dawn had already burst over MV-5, and the bright light pouring through the viewplate reminded me of our first hours on the planet. I said:

"We'll have to seal off that viewplate, Jamey."

"Right," he said.

He set to work with the metal spray-gun that would coat the exposed surface of the *Starwagon*, and Pamela watched him with curiosity and growing doubt. Then, just as the liquid metal closed off the viewplate to the sight of the terrain, she gasped and said:

"Jamey! It's father!"

I shot out of the pilot's chair and went to the other viewplate. In the forest, not fifty yards from the *Starwagon*, the tall foliage had parted again, and

the stern figure of Dr. Jaderlund was striding towards us. I didn't have to see his face to know the anger that was written on his features. He had been betrayed; there wouldn't be any mercy now.

"Maybe we can blast off in time," I said.

"No!" Jamey reached for the heatthrower. "He'll clamp a handcuff on the ship before we can fire the first rocket. There's only one way to stop him."

"You can't do that!"

Pamela looked frightened. She couldn't know the purpose of the device he was holding, but Jamey's face revealed his intent.

"Open the airlock," Jamey said.

"Wait a minute, kid, there may be another way. Maybe we can reason with him—"

"Okay, we'll try. I just want to be ready."

I pulled the switch that slid open the air lock. In another five minutes, Dr. Jaderlund's tall, erect figure was framed within it.

"Stop!" he said thunderously, raising his arm like a biblical prophet.

It was as if the raised arm was a signal. Before I could stop him, before Jaderlund could say another word, Jamey's finger was depressing the trigger of the heatthrower, and a wave of unseen fire was blasted full in the face of the old man. His body blackened and shrivelled in an instant, crumbling into horrible ashes before the

unbelieving eyes of his daughter.

"Close it!" Jamey shrieked. "Close it and blast off!"

I obeyed, without even thinking. The first rockets exploded beneath the ship, and then the others joined the fiery ovation. Slowly, the *Starwagon* rose from the great jungle and into a greater sky.

When I was no longer needed at the controls, I turned to see Jamey lifting Pamela's unconscious body from the floor. He placed her gently on his bunk, chaining her arms and legs in preparation for zero gravity, and then clambered into his own space suit. He took over for me at the controls, and I put on my own space rig.

I didn't speak for another hour. Jamey broke the silence first.

"Look, Chet," he said. "I know what you're thinking. But you're a grown man, right? You knew I had to do it."

"Sure," I said, frowning. "You knew what you were doing. Better get the girl into the spare space suit, no use taking any chances."

He grinned at me. "I knew you'd understand, Chet."

Pamela was moaning on the bunk. She was still unconscious when Jamey unchained her and strapped her into the spare rig.

I watched them, sourly.

"Adam and Eve," I said full of bitterness.

He came to the co-pilot's chair

when he was done. Then he smiled and said:

"I'll level with you, Chet. *She* didn't think you'd understand, but I know you better. You're interested in the easy life, just as I am, and I know you'll go along with me."

"What are you talking about?"

"Mrs. Jaderlund. Pamela's mother."

"What about her?"

"Chet, listen to me, listen hard. I knew Mrs. Jaderlund a long time before she ever came into the office. She's the one who gave me the three grand to buy the partnership. And she did it all for just this trip."

I stared at him, not understanding.

"She didn't tell you the whole truth, Chet, but I'm telling you now because we're partners. Okay?"

"Sure," I said, trying to be casual. "What is the truth, kid?"

"Mrs. Jaderlund had a reason for wanting Pamela back home, Chet. Maybe ten million reasons."

"I don't get you."

His smile widened. "There was a will, left by the old man when he disappeared. Maybe you didn't know it, but Jaderlund held half a dozen patents on atomic devices. He was worth plenty. The trouble was, Mrs. Jaderlund couldn't collect unless she could prove he was dead. That was the real purpose of our trip."

I had to force myself to answer.

"How did she know where Jaderlund was?"

"She's always known. He didn't make any mystery out of it, and she never tried to find him. She was happy without him, all right. But now she can't be happy unless she can get her hands on that money; she's starting to run out of the money he left her."

"And what about Pamela?"

"She wasn't even born when Jaderlund made his will, and he never had the sense to change it. All she can do now is testify that her father is dead, that we killed him in self-defense when he tried to prevent our departure. But I'm sure Mrs. Jaderlund will take care of her; we won't have to worry about that—"

"No," the girl said. "You won't have to worry . . ."

We turned. Pamela was rising from the bunk, unsteadily. But the heatthrower in her hands was rigid.

"No!" Jamey shouted.

"Get away from him!" she screamed at me. "Get away!"

I leaped from the chair towards her, but not soon enough to stop her finger from squeezing the trigger. The blackened cinder that had been Jamey crumbled to the floor of the ship, and she dropped the heatthrower from her hands. It floated free, and then clattered to a

*(Continued on page 67)*

# I Did Too See A Flying Saucer

By FRANK BRYNING

ILLUSTRATOR SCHROEDER

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*There are hard-headed realists who say, "If you can't prove it, it isn't so." There are less exacting folks who feel some things should be accepted on faith. Which brings up the question: How much faith do you have in flying saucers?*

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WHEN the man from space stepped out of his saucer I was ready.

On my note pad I quickly sketched a spot with four concentric circles around it. On each of the circles I drew a smaller spot.

I showed him the sketch and pointed to the center spot. Then I pointed to the sun.

"Sun," I said aloud. He looked at me with understanding and gave a slight smile.

Then I named Mercury on the nearest circle to the sun, Venus on the next circle out, and Earth on the third circle.

"Earth!" I repeated, and pointed toward the ground. "Earth!"

He nodded and smiled, and held out his hand for the pad and pencil.

Wetting the pencil on his

tongue he placed a small dot against Earth.

"Moon," he said, in perfect English!

He smiled rather broadly at my astonishment.

"And this," he said, putting the pencil point on the spot in the fourth circle, "is Mars—where we come from."

After that we got along famously.

I won't bore you with the stages through which we rapidly became acquainted with one another, or the explanations of why he could talk good English, and understood so much about the way we live and act on Earth. That has been done in the books about flying saucers already—and they are substantially correct. It all may be summed up briefly by saying that,



It looked like an oyster filled with gadgets.

in truth, by means of *some* of the many "unidentified flying objects" which have been reported and very many of what might be called "unobserved" flying objects, and by means of those of his people who even now live amongst us, unrecognized, we have been thoroughly studied and understood these many, many years.

He took me inside the saucer which, as I entered, seemed to be humming with a sort of suppressed power. He showed me around, referring to the vessel as a "scout," and explaining many of its features. After about ten minutes he remarked, casually:

"We'll be inside our mother ship in a few minutes' time."

I went to a porthole. It was true. Although I had not been aware of any motion in the saucer we had traveled a fantastic distance since I had stepped inside it. I *could* see Earth away to the *right* of me—mottled green and russet-brown like a peach, and with a milky-blue bloom on it that was the atmosphere.

Our saucer settled gently on the top of a cigar-shaped mother ship, entered a hatch, and then slid down on rails into the interior. We stepped out into a hangar holding five other "scouts."

Long ago I made up my mind that if ever I should be fortunate enough to see a flying saucer and meet people from Mars or Venus or some other world,

I would make a better job of convincing people about it than the general run of such reportings. I decided that if I could not procure some piece of tangible, concrete evidence, which would show, incontestably, that I had met some outworlder, I would keep my mouth shut and not add to the mountains of rumor, speculation, and sheer misinformation about what are quite properly known as unidentified flying objects.

Well—now that I am telling you about *my* flying saucer, you may draw your own conclusions.

Trouble with all other reports of flying saucers—and particularly with the claims of having met visitors from space is that one main thing—the lack of not merely credible but *compelling* evidence.

I think I have studied all there has been published on the subject, and I think you may agree with me that there is always this one essential item missing, which, if it were available, would compel conviction. That incontestably "outworld" artifact. Something that obviously could not have been made upon Earth, but which, having been made, must have been brought here by some beings from another world, where there must be a technology sufficiently ahead of ours to be capable of such achievement—and of the achievement of space travel as well.

But what did we have—until I got my artifact?

Books by the dozen. But books are written for all kinds of reasons—to make money, to gain notoriety or fame, as well as to publish some genuine information. And it is easier for people to believe that a book on flying saucers is written for one of these unworthy purposes, and deliberately faked, than to believe the much less likely and much less probable proposition of visitors from other worlds, and all that would imply.

Not me, mind you, because I have had the experience myself of meeting some of those visitors, and I am sure that some of the books do tell the facts. But my saying so won't convince you, I know.

Then there are newspaper reports. Well, I'm a newspaper man myself. But this is one of those times when all the people who normally swallow everything the newspapers tell them will say that you never can believe the papers. And it is fair comment that the non-expert eye-witnesses in most of these sightings have been generally proved in error. And there must be a high percentage of notoriety seekers amongst them.

But I am certain that a few of them did see the genuine article, because I have had positive proof myself.

Photographs. Now I have no doubt that some of the photographs published are genuine pictures of genuine spaceships—and why not, since I have seen, touched, and traveled in such

ships myself? Yet, unfortunately, almost every published photograph is ambiguous in some way or other. Most are hazy or out of focus. Perhaps because of the quite plausible haste in which they were taken, or of the fading evening light, or of the poor equipment, or the amateurish photographer, or the magnetic or radio-active emanations from the spaceship itself.

Sometimes the objects claimed to be space vessels in the photographs are too far away, too vague or doubtful in shape or size, to be positively and incontrovertibly space vessels *and nothing else*. Some have been shown to be pictures of other, identifiable things, like weather balloons, optical phenomena produced by objects or reflections on the lens of the camera, and such like. And, of course, everyone knows that almost any illusion can be faked on a photograph.

So it is more reasonable to believe that *in every case* some such alternative as error, illusion, or fake has occurred than to believe the incredible fact of visitors from space, together with all the still more incredible implications which that belief would involve.

You can see, therefore, why, long before I actually met my visitors from Mars, I was convinced there would be no point in talking or writing about them unless I could back up my claims with some incontestable, concrete, artifact.



It would have to be something which, in its metallurgy, its fine precision of manufacture, or its function and performance, would show itself to be so distinctly in advance of anything we are capable of on Earth that it could not be denied.

Not, for example, just a set of water-jug and goblets of a glass-like nature, delicately formed and colored, but unbreakable, and when tossed about merely bounce around giving off a musical, bell-like note. The plastics boys here on Earth might soon give us that one. Not something just beyond our reach, which we might suspect the Russians have achieved just a bit ahead of us—or which they might suspect we have just achieved. It would have to be something so far beyond us all that really revolutionary techniques must be involved.

And if I had not been given just that I would not be telling you this . . .

So when, in the same way as others before me, I was conducted through a large and (to me) bewildering control room where a few fawn-uniformed officers were on duty, into the domestic or social quarters of the mother ship, I eyed every object with a view to selecting some artifact which would serve as my irrefutable piece of tangible evidence. Something all would believe.

It was not until I was shown into the control room for reconnaissance scanners, or "spy

disks," that I found what I wanted.

"The very thing!" I exclaimed. "One of those disks!"

It took me a long time to persuade them to let me have one. Meanwhile, on a bench, one of the saucer men was repairing or servicing the mechanism of one of the scanners. They made no objection to my watching.

It was a dully gleaming metal lens-shaped thing about eighteen inches in diameter. At first glance its shell seemed solid, with a polished band around the perimeter and a polished "collar" about four inches in diameter around the center. Recessed inside this collar, and protected by it, was a four-inch diameter lens, staring straight up at the ceiling. The underside was the same as the top side. The disk rested on the central collar, the lower lens held off the bench about half an inch.

On closer inspection the dully shining area between the polished bands showed itself to be perforated with pinholes about one-eighth of an inch apart.

The reason for this was evident when the technician opened the metal carapace to reveal the interior mechanisms of the disk. The working parts were set like flies in amber in a transparent body which was all one piece with the lens. At three points, 120 degrees apart, were circular, two-inch diaphragms of metal.

"Microphones," commented my guide. "Each scanner has six, and all are very sensitive. The

scanner is mainly eyes and ears, with the necessary radio and video transmitters and remote-controlled maneuvering apparatus. All parts are set in this glass-like body, which is solid around them. Moving parts are few and heavily mounted, so that they function unaffected by fast accelerations and tight turns."

Then the mechanic did something that amazed me. The metal shell was open like the hinged back of a watch case—at an angle of about forty-five degrees. He wanted to do something to the microphone low down near where the two halves of the metal shell "hinged" together. So he just touched the open half, and it bowed like a hoop around to the other side!

There was no hinge! It was not connected to the lower half by any mechanical means!

I put out my hand.

"May I do that?" I asked.

"Certainly," he agreed.

I pushed the "lid" and it obediently rolled a few inches further on, still at the same angle, still adhering to the rim. I got my eye down to within a few inches of that invisible hinge. There was nothing to see. The perimeter of the upper shell touched the perimeter of the lower shell, and that was all. There was no metal connection or hinge between them.

I gave the upper shell a slap, and around it went three or four times, like a penny that has been spinning and is dying down. But

it didn't fall flat like a penny does. It remained standing at that angle of about forty-five degrees.

I took hold of the top of its rim and raised and lowered it several times. It acted as if it were hinged. I began to lower it right down, but the mechanic stopped me.

"Take care!" he warned me. "You must let it go before it gets right down or you might hurt your fingers. It snaps shut from about here."

With his thumb on the very edge he took it down to about five degrees. Suddenly it was shut—without a sound and without noticeable movement over the gap. As he turned the disk over I stopped him.

"There is no joint visible!" I said.

"There is no joint at all," he answered. "The two half-shells are all one piece now."

While I was goggling at the disk and trying to register that one, he rested it on the bench. The previous underside, now on top, flipped open!

The solid, glass-like body was identical with the opposite side I had seen before.

"How did you do that?" I asked.

He smiled.

"How shall I put it? A simple manipulation of—well—of what your science might call 'electro-magnetic forces.' The two halves of this metal shell are completely separate pieces of

shaped and perforated metal. There is a metal band about the transparent body in which all the mechanism is set, and which is a perfect insulator. When we activate—or 'charge'—the band and the two shells, they become as one. Nothing—or I should say nothing in the way of physical or electromagnetic violence amounting to, say, less than a hundred thousand volts by your measurements, can disrupt them."

He handed me a heavy, hammer-like implement, and closed the disk.

"Try to dent this shell," he invited me.

I gave the disk a sharp blow. There followed a low-pitched "boing-g-g" sound which quickly died away. The disk rocked a little. The tool in my hand vibrated as it bounced—literally bounced—from the disk, but there was not the slightest dent or mark on the metal shell. I had the feeling that the actual metal had not been touched.

"Harder—as hard as you can—but hold on to that hammer," said the mechanic.

This time I brought the hammer down with all the force I could muster. There was a somewhat louder and longer "bong-g-g-g-g." The disk rocked rather more and slid a few inches across the bench. My entire arm and shoulder went numb from the vibration as the hammer came back. But the disk was unmarked, and apparently untouched.

"Look," said my companion.

He took from a rack a heavy, sledge-hammer tool, swung it high and brought it down squarely on the center "eye" of the disk.

There were louder sound effects, mainly from the hammer and the bench—but the scanner barely quivered.

After a lot of discussion they agreed to let me borrow a disk.

They were reluctant because, they said, it would do no good. They were not afraid of losing it or of its being damaged so long as it remained closed. I was shown the simple yet undiscoverable manipulation needed to open the metal casing, so that I could demonstrate that incredible hinge, but I was sworn not to let the disk out of my hands or to show anyone how to open it. I was to publish my story, with pictures of the disk, and exhibit it as concrete evidence to whomever I thought fit, in order to substantiate my words and pictures. But I was to let no one attempt to take it to pieces. When closed it might be attacked with any tool or tested with any instrument or chemical. But I was not to permit any tool to be applied to it when open, or allow it out of my custody.

"What about returning it to you?" I asked.

"We shall be in contact with you when we want it back," said my guide. "Meanwhile, if you keep it closed, no harm can be done to it."

"But what if I want to get it

back to you at a certain time?" I insisted. "What if I should be sent away to cover a story somewhere, at short notice?"

My guide and the mechanic exchanged glances.

"In such an emergency you can call us or another of our scout vessels through the scanner itself. Like this . . ." He took up the disk and showed me. "You will then be informed what to do."

Finally I asked: "Why don't you make effective contact with our Earth governments, and reveal yourselves to us?"

My guide smiled. "The time is not yet ripe. That is a saying of yours, I believe."

"When will it be ripe?" I queried. "When will you be ready?"

"We are ready," he replied at once. "The time will be when you are ready."

"But you could help us so much," I pointed out. "We might be ready sooner if you did."

"We are helping, in some ways," he claimed. "But this is something in which you must mainly help yourselves. It is not a matter of your being given things. Such things will be no good to you unless you develop them yourselves."

"Then why do you assist me to tell the world about you?" I asked.

"Mainly because you have requested us," he said. "And such inquiries are amongst the ways of finding out for yourselves."

I thought that made it rather

like the difference between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. But I said: "I am truly grateful, believe me, but perhaps it is too soon?"

"Yes—and no," said my guide, slowly. "If you are believed by enough people the time of development may be hastened. If you are not believed it will be because it is too early yet, and things will continue much as they are now. In either case we shall have made yet another test which will assist us in estimating the situation for our own purposes."

It was late when I got back to town, which gave me a good excuse for not going to the office. Instead, I had supper at the Bon Ton, and went home to my apartment.

I went straight to work. My story was a good one, if I do say so myself. By midnight I had revised it and retyped it in triplicate. I locked the two carbon copies in the top drawer of my desk.

While I had it I literally did not let that disk go out of my presence. I even took it to the bathroom and had the package before my eyes while I cleaned my teeth and had a shower. I debated whether I should sleep with it under my pillow or locked in the wardrobe. I decided on the latter, but first I put the disk into a suitcase and locked that in the wardrobe. What I had to fear I don't know. After all, no one of this world other than my-

self could have known I had the thing. Yet I felt I couldn't safely let it out of my sight.

Next morning the disk was safe and sound inside the suitcase when I opened it up.

Nevertheless I took the suitcase with me to the bathroom. Miss Boland, from the front apartment, passed me in the corridor, and made no attempt to hide her old-maidish suspicion of such eccentric behavior. I stared haughily back at her.

While Jim Bailey, the news editor, was reading the story I took the scanner downstairs to Process Engraving to have it photographed for blockmaking.

"Sorry I can't leave it with you," I explained to Fred Buckman. "I'll pose it for you."

We took a dozen or so shots from various angles—some with the metal sheath closed and some with it open. Fred got a few special ones through the transparent body, with a spotlight showing up the innards.

"What is it—really?" Fred kept asking, despite my telling him a dozen times. He just couldn't believe it, although he exclaimed several times that "that machinery in there is out of this world."

"How right you are," I agreed. "Buy the first edition and read all about it. Meanwhile Fred—and this is really serious—these pics are confidential between you and me and Jim Bailey."

"Okay," said Fred. "Tell him I'll have prints up to him in half an hour."

Jim gave me a hard look when I got back. "It's a great story," he said, "and I believed it. Give me another look at that gadget."

He walked around his desk, looking at the scanner from all sides. He lifted it to feel the weight. Then he examined the rim all round. "How'd you open it, again?" he asked.

"Not telling," I said. "But I'll open it for you." I took the disk, turned around once, and when I faced him again it was open.

"Stage magician!" he growled. "Why the secrecy from me?"

"I promised not to show anyone," I told him. "As long as no one else can open it my friends regard it as safe."

Just then his telephone rang.

"Bailey speaking," he said. But after that he didn't get a word in for some time. He just listened. I watched his expression slowly fade and go stony. "All right," he said at last. "We'll hold it until they get here—photos and all."

Jim hung up and stared at the opposite wall for some seconds before he spoke.

"Security," he said. "They won't let us print this story until they've checked it. Photos likewise . . . I doubt if they'll let us use it at all . . ."

"But why?" I demanded. "Isn't this the proof they've been waiting for—as well as everybody else?"

"I think it is," replied Jim. "And for that reason I think they'll kill it altogether."

"They can't do that!" I objected. "This is the news story of the century!"

"They can—and I think they will," he replied quietly.

"But how'd they know about it?" I asked. "No one but you and I and Fred Buckman . . ."

"I told them," admitted Jim. "Every news editor and chief sub. in the country has been briefed to spot UFO stories and report to Security if not already cleared for publication. We have no choice. If we don't check before publication we're on the carpet afterwards."

"You mean to say we aren't free to print any story we get ourselves?" I insisted. "Any scoop—about unidentified flying objects?"

"Frankly, no—we aren't," said Jim. "Not until after Security says it's okay."

"And if they don't say it's okay?"

Jim Bailey shrugged. "They confiscate the material and kill the story."

"But why? What are they afraid of?" I protested.

"Hysteria, they say—mass hysteria from fear of invaders from space, and so on," said Jim. "So they are trying to prevent 'dangerous' rumors getting about and releasing only 'harmless' ones. Personally I think that's a blind. There's something deeper than that. Military Intelligence is in it too, of course."

"But we can't let them do that to this story, Jim," I said. "This is the real thing. It isn't going

to mislead or hoax or scare anyone. It's *genuine*—you know that."

"I know," he said. "But that's all the more reason why I think they'll suppress it. This isn't the first genuine story about flying saucers. It's the best, I reckon, since you've got that disk thing to prove it. But you have surely noticed, yourself, that the only UFO reports published nowadays are those which are either obviously phoney or can be laughed off or made look ridiculous in some way by some Army, Navy, Airforce, or Security spokesman."

"I've noticed," I said. "That's why I wanted this disk. It's uncontestable evidence."

"And that's why they won't let us use it," said Jim.

"Then give me back my story," I said. "And I'll take my disk elsewhere."

"Sorry—I can't let you do that," said Jim. "They know about both, and they'll be here at any moment to check on them."

"But Jim—" I started to say, when the buzzer on his desk sounded.

Jim answered it. "Send them up," he said, resignedly.

They were three big guys. I couldn't help looking at their feet. They were the type, all right.

They read my article and then they wanted to see the "gadget." I passed the disk over and let them handle it—closed, of course.

I didn't propose to open it, but just then Fred's photos came up in an envelope.

When they saw the shots of the open disk the Number One man said: "How do you open it?"

Taking the scanner I turned my back, touched and pressed and linked the right spots, turned again, and presented it open.

"How'd you do that?" demanded Number One.

"I was shown how by the owners of that scanner," I answered. "I am sworn not to show anyone."

He gave me a sharp look and then deliberately examined the disk, pressing it here and there, turning it upside-down, and then accidentally snapping it shut. After a few minutes of futile experiment he handed it to the other two. "See what you can do," he said.

Then he turned to Jim. "We must have the negatives of those pictures, and any other prints, spoiled or otherwise, and the men who photographed and processed them. We'll have to impound everything."

By the time Jim passed on the call to Fred, the other two investigators had given up trying to open the scanner.

"Now," demanded Number Two. "How do you open this?"

"I'll open it," I offered, "but I can't show anyone how."

"We'll have to know sooner or later," he warned me. "You might as well co-operate now."

"I'll co-operate gladly except

to break my promises," I replied. "I fancy I am more interested in telling everybody I can reach as much as I can, than you are in letting me."

"Have it your way now," he growled, handing me the disk. "You'll show us later."

With rather more arm and elbow movement than necessary, as seen from behind, I opened it again.

Together they studied its innards through the transparent cast and compared Fred's photos with them.

"The engineering and electronics boys'll have to see this," said Number Three flatfoot. "Better keep it open."

"No need," I said. "I'll open it whenever they want to see inside."

"Good of you," said Number Three. "But you mightn't be around when they want it open."

I slapped the scanner shut.

"I undertook that this disk would not leave my custody at any time," I said. "Where it goes I go. I am reliably informed that while it is closed no harm can be done to it except by some very considerable force. Before I open it again there will be certain conditions agreed upon. This is a free country—"

"Ha!" cut in Number Two. "Wise guy!"

"Wait. Let us get this straight," said Number One. He turned to me. "All this material, the disk, and you, Mr. Roberts, will have to go before the Direc-

tor of Security. These matters can be cleared up them. Let's not antagonize one another." He turned back to the others. "Mr. Roberts is within his rights. This is a free country. If we ask him to accompany us, with his disk, to the Director, and he agrees, that is all we have to do. Our job is to make sure that nothing will leak out from here, and then take him and all the material to the Director. Only if he declined to co-operate . . ." He shrugged.

"What then?" I asked.

He smiled. "But you are co-operating, Mr. Roberts."

"But suppose, as a matter of interest, I felt that I was being pushed around," I persisted, "and declined to co-operate further?"

He sighed. "Then, I suppose, we would 'have reason to suspect you of obstructing officers of the Department in the performance of their duties,' and you would then be liable to summary arrest, and to be charged . . .",

"Forget it!" I interrupted. "What if I were to resist arrest?"

At this the three of them grinned.

"If you were to offer violence to officers of the Department 'engaged in the preservation of the peace, order, and good government' of this country," said Number One, "we would be obliged to defend ourselves and to restrain you—"

"By superior force!" I finished for him. "And arrest me just the

same. Well, don't be afraid of me. I am thankful that I am free to co-operate with you to the fullest extent that my commitments and my conscience will allow."

As sarcasm it was a bit heavily laid on, I admit. But I was just coming to realize how, within half an hour, my seat on top of the newspaperman's world had been yanked out from under me, and I had become a rabbit in a trap.

After three hours more in the office of James F. Wakeford, Director of Security, I was in no mood to be polite to anyone. We had been through my story over and over again, while a stream of technical experts came to examine the scanner, pronounce upon it, request it for laboratory examination, and leave. I had to open and close it endlessly, and constantly refuse to show them how.

Towards the end General Tuffnell, Chief of the General Staff, came in, bringing with him Air Commodore Perkins and Rear Admiral Duffy. They were all in full dress uniform, having been called away from some official function.

So we went through it all again for their benefit. They sat saying nothing but taking it all in, while my story was checked yet again, point by point, with what I had said before.

My typescript was on Wakeford's desk, with a new file which had grown fat already with



Fred's photographs, the negatives, reports of the investigators, and what not.

"Mr. Roberts," Wakeford finally said to me, "this matter you have got on to is bigger than perhaps you realize. I regret we cannot permit publication."

"Why not?" I protested yet again. "This is one of the great events of the century—of all history, perhaps—and people have a right to know. What have you to fear? Not these aliens. They've had us in the hollow of their hands for years, and if they are hostile they could have settled our hash long ago."

He shrugged. "Perhaps," he conceded. "But we don't know what the effect of this knowledge will be on the people. Fear—hysteria—panic . . ."

"It seems to me," I said, "that there is fear, hysteria, and panic in high places on this matter, but not amongst the people. The people are interested—they are fascinated by the idea of meeting people from other worlds—but they are not afraid."

"But if they knew what we know, they might be. And then . . ." He left the sentence unfinished.

"Then what?" I demanded. "Have you forgotten the bombing of London during the Second World War? No doubt the people of London—and other bombed areas on both sides—were afraid. But look how they acted. They *took* it. 'London can take it' became a proud boast, and their leaders were strengthened

by the people's example. I think you need that here and now. If the aliens are enemies the people have the right to know and be forewarned. Let them get used to the idea. Let their millions of minds get busy on things to do. They'll come up with ideas by the thousand. Incredible as it may seem, they might even produce one good idea which their clever rulers haven't thought of!"

Wakeford maintained a poker face. "It might come to that yet," was all he said.

"But if you keep them in the dark until the last moment," I persisted, "and you have to call on them at that time to fight and die and obey without question, you will have to cry 'danger'—and no doubt exaggerate it. Then you *will* create panic and hysteria!"

"I am afraid that is not the way Governments anywhere in the world see it, Mr. Roberts," he replied coldly.

"So much the worse for Governments," I retorted. "Governments that think they can't trust the people to know what is really going on have to try to fool the people. They have to mislead. And leaders who mislead . . ."

He cut me off with a gesture. "Sorry. You may have a point there, but we are not here to discuss Government policy, right or wrong. We have to sift this story in every detail and make sure that it doesn't leak. And we need your co-operation, Mr.

Roberts. I must ask you to give all the assistance you can to the various experts who may wish to question you further."

"That I shall gladly do, Mr. Director," I replied. "It is my desire to give all the information to as many people as possible. But it seems to me that your objectives would be better served if I refused to say a word to anyone."

He gave a sort of appealing smile, and at that moment his intercom buzzed. He listened for a few seconds. "Send it in," he requested.

"You realize, Mr. Roberts," he began to explain as he accepted an envelope brought in by another big flatfoot, "that we must hold every piece of evidence in our hands. We now have all the photographic prints and negatives, and here is the spy disk itself. We have the original copy of your article. You made two carbon copies, I believe?"

From the envelope he took my two carbon copies, which I had locked in the top drawer of my desk at home!

For a moment I couldn't say a word. For some seconds more I struggled to decide what to say of the many things that needed to be said. In the end I sneered my dirtiest sneer and told him:

"You don't really need my cooperation, Mr. Director. You are way ahead of me all the time. What you need is some way of convincing me, in the future, that Security can be trusted!"

"Please, Mr. Roberts," he protested. "Don't think I am not sympathetic to a journalist whose scoop of a lifetime has been killed. I apologize, but I would have to order the same thing over again if the situation repeated itself tomorrow."

"Which only proves again that my security and everyone else's is in more danger from Security than from anything else," I cracked back. I thought it was quite a dig, at the time, but it didn't get me anywhere.

"As for this spy disk," he went on. "We cannot permit you to show it to anyone. It will remain in our charge."

"But I have promised to return it," I said. "I promised not to let it out of my personal custody!"

"You had no right to give such a promise," broke in General Tuffnell, "involving a matter of Security of vital importance to your country!"

I saw Wakeford wince.

"It wasn't a matter of Security when I made the promise," I told the General. "And I don't believe it is even now!"

"We do!" announced the General. "And that's what counts. This disk, whatever its nature, will stay with us. We shall learn its secrets if we have to dismember— Hold him!"

Two of the husky investigators grabbed me when I was only inches from the scanner, and yanked me back. The Director was on his feet, reaching for it

# KIMO

By AL SEVCIK

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*Kimo was alone and frightened as he went forth into ruin looking for a friendly face. He found none, but perhaps sympathy and understanding were still available at ten cents a bottle.*

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PANTING hard from the short climb, Kimo stood at last on the top of the small hill. His shriveled frame shook sporadically as he hunched his shoulders against the sharp night wind that had cried at him across New Mexico and followed him now, like a chill spirit, across the plains of Texas.

The wind fluttered a ragged strip of garment that hung, through habit, from half of his belt, for only one thigh was covered, his left was bare. Strips of some unidentifiable cloth flapped against his ribs which protruded above his sunken stomach more like the bones of a skeleton than the body of a man.

He stood still for a minute looking at nothing through watery old eyes, then sighed and slowly squatted on emaciated

legs close beside a protecting bush. Painfully he adjusted tired muscles until he sat fully on the rocky ground. Then, nodding his head forward, he closed his eyes and prepared to die.

"I'm old," he thought, not understanding numbers. "Too damn old." His childhood, forgotten somewhere in the desert, had passed into a lifetime of tending goats, and planting, and hunting on the brilliant reds and blacks of the southwestern wastelands. Alone, except for yearly trips to a sun-blackened desert town, eight sandy little shacks and a store and a bar, and other old men like himself. This was his life, the sun, the sand-laden wind, the sudden angry storms, and four to six straggly female goats that gave him milk sometimes, and stood with him against the desert.

also, with the idea, no doubt, of saving it from me. But he drew back suddenly, as its metal husk snapped shut and a clear voice filled the room.

"On the contrary," said the voice, speaking in a meticulous English, but oh so coldly and disdainfully. "No secrets will be learned from this scanner. Some day we hope to freely and gladly give such knowledge to the people of Earth if they have not, by then, discovered it for themselves. But this will not be while it can be exploited for commercial, political, or military advantage."

A tense, power-charged thrumming seemed to fill the room. The paper-knife and metal blotter on the desk rushed together with a click, and clung as if magnetized. Pins and paper clips in adjoining compartments of the glass tray flowed together into a single cluster. The hair on all our heads stood up of its own accord.

The scanner lifted from the table and hovered close to the high ceiling, its center lens glinting . . .

"When the time is ripe," resumed the voice, "we shall speak in friendship directly to all the peoples of Earth. But that time will not be until the peoples themselves are truly in control of their own affairs."

Flatfoot Number Three drew his pistol. Number Two began to do likewise.

Then the disk was gone!

Only a crash and a tinkling of glass as it whipped through

the window, and a flash of sunlight as it banked to avoid the opposite wing of the building and shoot upward, revealed its passing.

In the silence I burst out laughing at them all, and in particular at General Tuffnell, who had staggered back into the arms of Air Commodore Perkins when the disk passed within inches of the service decorations on his chest.

Yet they had won, after all. Before I left Wakeford's office I warned him that I had given no guarantee not to talk or write about the scanner or the spaceships.

"Go ahead," he told me. "Any account you publish will be treated as fiction—scientific fantasy most likely. Just another of the many voices crying in the wilderness—*because they cannot produce any concrete evidence*, as you say in this article."

Now look at this item from the *Telegraph*—my own paper, by the way, but not reported by me! No sir!

"THURSDAY—A flying saucer which shot up into the sky from the quadrangle of the Security Building was seen by three independent witnesses, and from different vantage points, yesterday, it is claimed. One of the observers asserts that it shot out through the closed window of one of the top executives' offices, breaking the pane and showering glass fragments into the quadrangle.

One night, Kimo, squatting on the sand, had seen bright flashes march across the horizon, and in the daytime great, oddly shaped clouds had rode the sky. There had been flashes for many nights, Kimo couldn't count how many, and always he had turned his eyes away, afraid.

He couldn't go to town that year because of the prolonged sickness that left him weak and caused the hair to fall from his body. Two of his goats died. Kimo got better, but after that his breath came shorter, and he was thin and tired easily. He stayed in the desert for three more years, living as he always had, then one day he sensed the last sun coming and he led his goats to town again, for he wanted to die near men, not alone among goats in the desert.

But the town was empty. Broken doors revealed a barroom of smashed glass, sparkling amidst stains of liquor long since dried. The store, also, was wrecked, but there were some canned goods left and Kimo took a few of these and started to walk. He told himself he was going to find men, but he didn't know where the men were and there was no one to ask, so he just walked as far as he could each day without thinking much about it. It had been a long, long time since he had thought much about anything and even then he hadn't known many words so his thoughts had been simple, and confused with unexplained feelings.

Now, sitting on the dark windy hill, Kimo pondered briefly on the empty journey, and his eyebrows lowered in a bewildered frown. He had happened across other towns, all, like his, vacant except for growling dogs and thin, starving cats that seemed to look at him almost as if he were to blame for something. He found larger areas, too, of twisted steel and shattered buildings but these hadn't impressed him as much as the abandoned towns because he had never known what a city should look like.

Kimo's mind drifted. He had been walking for a long time now, he remembered. For many days, even before the cold wind came. He shivered. His feet were bare and sore. Each day he had walked a little less far and today, he tried to think, today he had hardly walked at all. Now he was too weak to go on. He would die here, cold and alone, like an animal. He sniffed and his eyes suddenly overflowed across his sunken cheeks. He cried softly.

He dozed for awhile, then woke again because he was an old man and slept in fits. The wind had stopped, leaving the night still. Kimo slowly raised his head and looked blankly at the dark, clear sky. His gaze drifted past the silhouettes of shrubs and occasional trees, past the yellow moon, the sharp white stars, and the red light twinkling faintly on the horizon. He

lowered his head, then suddenly jerked it erect again.

"Red light?" He stared at it through squinted eyes and saw that its flashing was not the ordinary twinkling of a star but regular, on and off. "It's not a star," he thought. "It must be . . ." he didn't want to think the word, to open himself to disappointment, but he couldn't stop. "It must be men!"

Kimo stared hard at the flashing redness, excitement slowly welling up within him and tensing his frail, stringy muscles. To be with men again!

When dawn came and the light disappeared, he had estimated its distance. "Two days and nights," he thought, and, wondering if he could last, he rose and started out.

He walked steadily all day, painfully concentrating on placing one foot before the other. After a few hours his foot sores broke and red drops glistened in the grass behind him. Later on he stumbled across a broken, overgrown road going in the same direction, and gratefully climbed up on its relatively smooth surface. He stopped once to drink at a well that had collapsed on one side, and once more to take some vegetables from a fenced off patch behind a creaking farm house. When evening came Kimo stopped at times and rested, leaning against a post or stunted tree. He didn't dare pause for long, or to sit at all, for he felt that his body might not start again.

After it was dark he climbed a small rise and fearfully inspected the horizon, afraid that the light might not be there, that the men would be gone. He didn't see it at first and almost cried out in panic, then it flashed to his right and Kimo sighed, trying to calm his heart. It didn't seem so far away now, but he still couldn't make it out, just a red, pulsating glow in the night.

The moon rose as he stood there, and Kimo knew that if he turned around he might see the hill where he stood shivering the night before, but he didn't turn, he didn't want to remind himself that an old man must spend a day walking a distance a youth could run in hours.

He trembled in the cold wind that had come with the moon's rise, turned, and walked on down the cracked road that crawled from the darkness ahead of him and vanished into the darkness behind. The wind chilled his back and he stooped as he walked staring at the road ahead, blind to the empty land that moved away on either side. The cold aches and pains became part of his existence and he didn't consciously notice their drumming background in his dreams of the men ahead, men to give him food, to make him warm, and, most of all, men simply to be with so he wouldn't have to die alone.

In the morning it began to rain, and his few torn rags clung tight but offered no practical

protection from the large damp insects that splatted against his skin.

For intervals now he forgot where he was. The rain and the cold would vanish and he'd be sitting in the warmth of his desert shack watching the evening sun paint the sands. Sometimes he seemed a boy again, and forgotten memories would churn for a moment then slowly sink back out of the light. In between times he dreamed of the men ahead and tried not to think how pitifully slow his limping body moved.

He looked up suddenly, it was dark and the red flashed just beyond, obscured by something, he couldn't see what. But his body was exhausted now, failing. Every step was slow, every breath was hard. Each motion meant pain.

Beside him low walls and dark piles of rock clung close against the ground. But further ahead the road slid past twisted iron spires that jabbed at the pale night sky, and hollow buildings that gazed silently as shrouded spectres. The rain had stopped and things dripped softly in the dark.

Drawn by the hypnotic pulsing of the red haze, Kimo left the road and crawled across rubble strewn lots and through the black shadows of the ragged buildings. "Men!" He tried to

call, but his throat was dry and his lips worked soundlessly.

At last he crawled to the final building before the blazing red and, hardly noticing the raw soreness of his body, slowly pulled himself erect, hand over hand up the rough side of the building, to meet these men as a man, on his feet. He staggered to the corner.

A protruding hook caught his belt, broke it, and sent Kimo crashing to his knees in the mud of yesterday's rain.

Red beat down on him, pulsing through his pain-closed eyelids like a gigantic heartbeat. Slowly Kimo raised his head and looked up at the great red light flashing above him over and over, "... A COLA." An automatic sign, three letters broken, powered by its own atomic pile, designed to last forever.

Kimo didn't understand signs or know that the flashing script was a thing to read, but suddenly he knew that there weren't any men around, that there hadn't been for a long, long time.

He seemed to shrink slightly, then with an abrupt cry, he stood and hurled a stone full at the light. Glass broke. The flashing stopped.

Kimo's muscles failed and he sat heavily, naked, on the ground. Tears suddenly flooded across his cheeks, and his sagging body shook again and again with sobs as the sun slowly rose in the sky.

## THE END




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# *It Started With Sputnik*

By BERTRAM A. CHANDLER

ILLUSTRATOR LLEWELLYN

*Perhaps the lesson to be learned  
from this little imaginative yarn  
is: "Don't send a cat to  
do a man's job!"*

**T**HAT was the year of the satellites, of the Sputniks. That was the year of the Space Dog. That was the year it all started.

We didn't know what it was that we were starting. None of us as much as guessed—not even the theologians. To the scientists and the engineers it was

the Dawn of the Space Age, as it was to most of the millions of newspaper readers. Oh, there were some pessimistic souls who regarded the triumphs of the rocketeers as proof that no place in the world was safe from the intercontinental ballistic missile. They were right—in a way. The launching of that first, unfortunate hound into her closed orbit round the planet did mean the doom of civilization, although in a totally unexpected manner.

Those of you who have never known what it was like before the coming of our insolent, capricious masters will find it hard to envisage things as they were. Even if we are successful in this desperate attempt to overthrow our rulers there can never be any return to the old days and the old ways. It could be that the devils we know may prove preferable to the devils we don't know—but I doubt it. The Power whose aid we hope to enlist may be aloof, and cruel at times, but she has an essential dignity sadly lacking in those other Powers that we so foolishly — albeit unwittingly — invoked. Too, *her* people have suffered as much as ours under the rule of the beasts.

It wasn't a bad world at all —by present day standards—the year that the trouble started. We grumbled, and we dreaded, at times, the future—but it wasn't a bad world. Even with the ever present threat of

atomic war, it wasn't a bad world. We were ruling—or misruling—ourselves. The power was ours, *ours*, as was the choice. It was up to us to decide whether we lived in Heaven or died in Hell. There had been, during our last big war—it finished some twelve years before the launching of the Space Dog—a lot of talk about the Four Freedoms. They were what we were supposed to be fighting for, Freedom from want. Freedom from fear. Freedom of speech. Freedom of thought. Nobody mentioned the Fifth Freedom, which is the most important of all, and that's the one that we miss the most. Freedom to go to Hell our own way. We—all of us who can remember the old days—rather resent having been dragged there by outsiders.

It didn't matter what nationality we were—the world was a collection of nations then and not, as now, just two big Empires—we all had that freedom. And we were free to dream, too. We were free to dream of the Earthly paradise that would come with the wise use of automation and atomic power. We were free to dream of ships to the Moon—and how close we were to realizing that dream!—and the planets and, even, the stars. But automation is no more than a legend—all manufactured things are made, now, slowly and painfully by men, women and children. Atomic power is only an old, half-re-

membered, half-believed story. *They* saw to it that the power stations and the research establishments were destroyed. *They* used *their* powers to make ineffective and useless the stockpiles of atomic weapons, of all weapons. Perhaps *they* saved the world—but *they* saved it for *their* people, not for us—for their purposes.

It was the Russians who launched the first animal into Space. A dog, it was. You'll know all about her. Her statue stands in every village, every town. It stands by the dozen in every city. She died, eventually, out there in the cold and the darkness, in what we thought of, then, as the loneliness. Before she died she must have called—and her call was answered. It wasn't answered at once. After all—a Being to whom Eternity is no more than a normal life span is slow to awaken, is slow, even when awakened, to take action.

After that first dog there were other animals. There were rats. (We were lucky there, very lucky. Somehow Man, who has always had an odd taste in deities, never got around to worshipping those repellent creatures.) There were guinea pigs. There were mice. There were monkeys. To an unbiased observer—if such a one existed—it must have seemed that Man was determined to fill the Space around his planet with a sample of every known life form.

There were, as I have said, monkeys.

This went on for a few years, with all concerned feverishly accumulating data that would be of value when the first human beings ventured into Space. Detailed plans were in existence for the establishment of the Lunar Colony, for the management of the Mars Expedition. The first man-carrying rockets were already being constructed, and the first Space Station was only a matter of a few weeks in the future when the realization came that all was not well.

It was in Russia that the trouble started. The Russians were always a secretive people, and at first the lack of news of events within the borders of that country were taken to be indicative of some struggle for leadership. It had happened before and was, we all thought, happening again. Then fantastic, incredible reports began to filter through. There was, it seemed, another Russian Revolution. The dogs had risen against their erstwhile masters. Packs of savage hounds roamed the streets of Moscow and Leningrad, ripping to bloody shreds any man, woman or child unlucky enough to cross their path. The Red Air Force was grounded, and the Army was trying to fight the enemy with swords and bayonets, firearms being useless. Some of the Russian leaders escaped and made their way to London and Washington. They appealed to the Western

leaders for aid. They begged that fleets of aircraft be sent to bomb their cities. They told of the great, shadowy figure, like that of a man with a dog's head, who strode always before the brute armies, whose appearance struck men with a paralyzing terror.

They were mad, we all said. They had been deposed by a people who had had enough of tyranny—we didn't know what tyranny was, then—and wished to be revenged upon those who had been their subjects. I often wonder what would have happened if we had believed them. Would our aircraft, our atomic bombs, have been effective? Could we have stemmed the tide before it had risen too far?

We heard no more from Russia—but we heard of the wave of canine revolt that was spreading westwards from her borders, that had engulfed Poland and Finland and the Scandinavian countries, that was beginning to sweep through Germany. Throughout the remainder of the world the authorities acted at last. They knew *what* was happening, without knowing *why*. The most plausible theory was that the Russians had developed a virus that would turn the most docile household pet into a savage killer and that by some mischance the virus had got loose in their own country. In any case the disease, as it was thought to be, was spreading. Orders went out that all dogs—

save for a few to be kept for laboratory use—were to be killed. Many were killed. Many were hidden by loving masters and mistresses—and repaid the trust by acts of treachery such as we, in these latter years, have come to associate with that once crawling, servile slave now become master.

Then, suddenly, the dogs found allies—allies with a manual dexterity the equal of Man's. In the old days monkeys were indigenous to the Tropics—to India and Africa and Central America—but there were many of them to be found in all the nations of the world. They were in zoological gardens—the places in which animals from all over the planet were displayed for the edification and education of the people. They were in laboratories. Some of them, incredible as it may seem, were used in the manufacture of remedies for various diseases to which the human race was—and still is, especially so now that no further supplies of vaccine are being manufactured—prone. Some of them were destined to be the crews of further experimental space vehicles.

The dogs and the monkeys were a strong combination. I know. I was among those taking part in the defense of Southampton, trying to hold back the brutes from the docks and the evacuation ships. I was one of a mixed party of merchant seamen and civilians manning a barri-

cade. Rifles we had, and shot-guns, and an ancient Lewis machine gun. We wondered, as we waited there, what had happened to the Army and the Air Force. We knew, within a little, what had happened to the Navy. We had heard of the simian saboteurs whose small size had enabled them to creep aboard vessels unobserved, whose nimble hands had proved capable of causing the destruction of many a ship.

It was about half an hour after sunset when the action started. We saw them coming along the road, keeping to the shadows, hugging the walls of the buildings. There were Alsations and terriers, spaniels even. We opened fire—single, aimed shots from the rifles, a burst of tracer from the Lewis gun. We heard yelps. We saw a few dark shapes sprawling motionless; the others vanished into doorways and side streets.

We waited, and saw that they were advancing again. Again we opened fire. Had there been anybody among us with any military training it is possible that we would have watched the rooftops as well as the road. But we didn't. The first grenade that fell among us put the Lewis gun out of action and killed most of our party.

I lay where I had fallen and saw them there, silhouetted against the pale sky—a row of black, gesticulating shapes like evil pygmies. I still had hold of my rifle and I raised it, pulling

the trigger. There was a faint click, nothing more. I ejected the round, tried to fire again.

Then I saw *It* looming high in the sky, behind *Its* people. All of you will have seen *It*, and you will have felt awe and terror, but what you will have felt will be a pale shadow of the feelings of anybody like myself seeing *It* for the first time. I stared at the great shape of the crowned monkey in speechless terror, at the huge, shadowy bulk of it, at the gleaming, crimson eyes.

Somebody was shaking me, pulling me to my feet. Somebody was screaming, "Run! Run!" It seemed ages before I could force my head to turn away from the frightening sight of the first god that I had ever seen. It was ages more before I could will my legs to move. And then I was running like one in a nightmare, seemingly skimming over the ground, conscious all the time that there was some unspeakable horror close behind me.

Later that night we sat, my companion and I, in a bedroom of a deserted house. We watched from the window the flames leaping higher and higher over the docks; we heard the screams. We still had our rifles with us, but doubted that they would be of any use except as clubs. We had knives that we had found in the kitchen.

It was my friend who explained it all to me. He was an aeronautical engineer by trade

—and he had hoped, he said, to become an astronautical engineer—and had made the study of comparative religions his hobby.

"I think I've got it doped out," he said. "There *may* be a way out of the mess, too. Anyhow, I'm going to tell as many people as I can what I think has happened, starting with you. Meanwhile—keep your eyes skinned for dogs or monkeys . . ."

"I am," I said. "And I've blocked the chimney."

"Good. Then just listen while I'm talking—and keep on watching. This, I think, was the way of it. For quite a few centuries now we've been an irreligious race. Even in the so-called backward countries people have been letting science take the place of their gods. Now—what happens to gods when they have no worshippers?"

"They . . . die, I suppose," I said.

"That's what I used to think. I don't think so any longer. They sleep—but not on this world. They sleep somewhere in Space. A thousand miles out? A million? The other side of the moon? I don't know . . ."

"Anyhow, just imagine two deities slumbering peacefully out there, two deities whose animal worshipping followers have long since lost their belief, their faith. Two deities whose working life, so far as this world is concerned, is over. One of them Egyptian and the other one Indian . . ."

"One of them, we will suppose, is a dog. We, fools that we are, send a dog out to perish in the cold and the dark. That dog appeals, somehow, to the essential spirit of its race, the spirit that was worshipped in ancient Egypt . . . Do you remember the dog-headed god that the Russians reported? Then we start sending out monkeys. They make their appeal to their race spirit . . ."

"Incredible!" I said.

"Isn't everything that's happened incredible?" he countered. "We've dreaded fission bombs and fusion bombs and cobalt bombs and bacteriological warfare—but none of us ever dreamed that we should see the world given over to the rule of the beasts."

"They'll be beaten," I said.

"Will they?" he asked. "Will they? It's gods that we're up against, remember—*gods*. What can you do when the fuel of a jet or rocket motor fails to burn? What can you do when a hydrogen bomb—it's been tried—just won't explode? What can you do when even rifles are useless? It's like those old wars in the Old Testament that the Children of Israel always won because the Almighty intervened on their behalf with a few miracles."

"What do you intend to do?" I asked him.

"To survive," he said. "They'll not be killing all of us—we're too useful to them. Can you imagine a monkey doing one

hard day's work? Can you imagine a dog being willing to do without the pampering that he's become used to over the centuries?

"So, if enough of us with the know-how survive, we might, some day, be able to launch a man-carrying rocket into Space . . . We might be able to make our appeal to a higher authority . . ."

He survived.

He's one of the scientists on that island at which the ship will be calling shortly. Our lords and masters permitted us to maintain a pitiful skeleton of the great network of communications that once covered the world—even they, to a certain extent, are dependent upon long distance transport for the upkeep of their standards of life. Luckily neither dogs nor monkeys are sea-minded, and so it has been possible for personnel and supplies to be smuggled out of England and America and Russia. Luckily the gods are as stupid as their people—after all, they're only animals, even though they do possess supernatural powers.

Tomorrow we call at that unnamed island in the Pacific.

Tomorrow we see the rocket fired. It has taken all our resources and years of toil to build. It would never lift a man. We shall never be able to build a man-carrying ship—we realize that—and we are old, all of us, and soon there will be nobody who remembers the glories of our race before it was given over to the bestial empery of the dog and the monkey and reduced to their servitude.

The rocket will work. It has to work. It will carry into Space something living, something small, something weighing only a few pounds. It will carry into black emptiness—or not-emptiness—the representative of a race that has fared worse than Man, that has been harried almost out of existence by the legions of Anubis and Hanuman.

She knows, I think, what her destiny will be. She is sitting on my lap as I write, and she is purring, and her sharp little claws are pricking the skin of my thigh. She looks up at me and there is, I swear, a real intelligence in those green eyes.

I shall be sorry to lose her.

I hope that the wrath of Pusht, the Cat Goddess, will be recompense for my loss.

THE END

# IN THE BALANCE

By MICHAEL M. CAHILL

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*There is an old adage—no doubt familiar to you—beginning with a horseshoe nail and ending up with a lost battle. It's interesting to know that such inconsequentials will still be plaguing the men who will ride to the stars.*

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**O**KAY, Harrison. You are next," said the Embarkation Officer. "Wait for the port to open. Keep to this side of the funnel until the control light changes to yellow, then move across and stand on the grill. As soon as the green comes up, you can pass straight through into the airlock. Savvy?" Harrison nodded.

From his post by the observation turret, Norman Langster watched silently as Harrison clamped his helmet into place and then paused for the regulation three seconds before raising his hand to the oxygen switch. With a slow measured tread he crept forward, like a hunch-backed beetle, weighed down by his space suit in the satellite's artificial gravity. In a few seconds, Langster reflected, he'll be in the starship; in a few min-

utes, he'll be a thousand light years away. God, we've really hit the jackpot this time!

Nimble the Managing Director swung himself down from the companionway and walked over to the exit port: "That the lot?" he asked.

The Embarkation Officer looked up. "Yes, sir," he replied smartly. "The last member of the crew weighed precisely ninety-eight point seven zero four two six three kilograms. I've just got to calculate the ballast. It won't take a moment."

"Double-check it," Langster advised him. "We can't afford to take chances—not with six men and a hundred million dollars' worth of equipment in the balance." He laughed at his little joke. *In the balance.* Nicely phrased, he thought. Yes, very nicely phrased, indeed. The Em-



barkation Officer grinned back dutifully.

"Precision," the Managing Director went on. "That's the secret when you're converting mass into energy. Change a five to a six or drop a decimal place and you're lost forever. Accuracy, split-second timing, they're the things that count."

"Think they'll make it?" the Embarkation Officer inquired.

Langster inclined his head. "No reason why they shouldn't," he answered. "The radio-controlled prototype came back in one piece. Besides," he added unnecessarily, "they're all Grade One stock."

The Embarkation Officer flushed angrily. He was Grade Three himself, like most of the five hundred personnel on the satellite. Only the Managing Director was Grade One. Not that it mattered, of course. You couldn't choose what test tube you came out of. But still it was pretty galling to have it thrown in your face the whole time. He reached for the audiophone: "Lab," he said tersely, "Embarkation here. Ballast for starship—Kilograms six nine stop five eight zero zero five two. Repeat that, please . . . Yes, that's right. Have it sent up to me as soon as it's ready."

"Who's the duty porter?" asked Norman Langster.

"Muldoon, I imagine, sir."

A look of vexation swept across the Director's face. "Well, you can tell Muldoon for me I

shall be calling on him in his quarters in exactly ten minutes. He's been getting fresh with the lab girls again." Scowling, he strode briskly away down the passage.

Mick Muldoon ambled leisurely towards the embarkation point. A foot taller than anyone else on the satellite, his vast rock-like features were set in a craggy smile, and he was humming the hit tune from the *Conquest of New York* which had long been one of his favorites. Hanging effortlessly from either hand were the two ballast containers ringed in their metal straps.

The Embarkation Officer glared at him with growing antagonism. "Get a move on, can't you?" he snapped, venting a little of his own damaged pride. We haven't got all week, you know." Muldoon pondered very thoughtfully without increasing his rate of progress: "You're joking, aren't you?" he remarked as they drew level. "Awful lot of jokers on board this hulk."

Muttering a silent prayer, the Embarkation Officer directed him into the cleansing cabin. "White coveralls and portable oxygen," he commanded. "Then get under the cleaner. I'm not allowing a speck of dust on that ship." Muldoon shrugged his massive shoulders: "Lot of fuss about nothing," he said with an agreeable smile. After an absence of a few minutes he reappeared clad from neck to foot in

thick white purelon, his head encased in a round perspex helmet.

"Right," said the Embarkation Officer, "you know your orders. Wait for the yellow—that means the vacuum is complete—then place the ballast on the weighing grill and stand back. As soon as I give you word, remove the ballast from the grill and get on it yourself. Don't shuffle about. When the green light comes on, go straight through into the airlock. On the way back you won't have any ballast, but you'll stand on the grill again. Is that clear? Are there any questions?"

"It's clear enough," replied Muldoon placidly. "Only it's a lot of fuss about nothing, as I said before. Why, when I was on the cleaning shift, you didn't bother to weigh me or the vacuum sucker on the way back, did you? Just goes to show it's a waste of time, that's what I say."

"No one gives a damn what you say," the Embarkation Officer retorted. "And for your personal information, Muldoon, the vacuum sucker was cleaned and re-weighed immediately on return, just to insure that you hadn't left a great chunk of it lying around inside the ship. A few grammes overweight and the whole blasted project would be a fiasco. Understand?" Muldoon nodded. He didn't, of course. But who the hell cared? Grasping the ballast containers, he eased himself gently through

into the connecting funnel. The exit port closed behind him.

Patiently he waited for the yellow light to come on, and then stepped forward and dumped the two containers on the weighing grill. "Muldoon!" his earphones spat venomously. "You blithering idiot! It's overweight. You've left the carrier straps on. Take them off, at once!" Muldoon breathed heavily. This was too much: "Look," he said with unaccustomed phlegm, "you never mentioned the bloody straps. Think I'm a mind-reader or something?" The earphones buzzed incoherently. Thirty seconds later, he was inside the starship.

Harrison greeted him as he came out of the airlock. "Good man," he remarked cheerfully. "See you've got the ballast." One at a time, he took the two containers and, staggering a little, carried them across to a storage locker. Muldoon grinned from ear to ear: "Find them heavy?" he asked with ill-feigned innocence.

"We're not all like you," replied Harrison, panting with exertion. Muldoon flexed the great muscles beneath his coveralls: "I'm Grade Six," he announced proudly. "There aren't many of us left." Harrison smiled: "It must feel good to be strong," he said.

Encouraged by his reception, Muldoon lolled peacefully back against a lateral support girder. "Boy," he remarked at length,

"this first faster-than-light trip sure is something, isn't it? You guys have what it takes." Harrison shrugged non-committally. "Though you've no need to worry," Muldoon confided, sinking his voice to a whisper, "You'll be all right. I've given you the only piece of luck I've got—and it's never let me down."

"How come?" said Harrison mystified.

"Well, I guess I shouldn't be telling you this," replied the other. "You see, they're so darned pernickety around here. But the fact is . . ."

"Muldoon!" his earphones crackled with impatience. "Quit talking and report back. The Director wants to see you." Muldoon turned his gloved palms upward in a gesture of defeat. "I've got to go back," he announced. Reluctantly, he moved over to the airlock.

"Hey, one minute!" yelled Harrison. "You've forgotten something. Something heavy," he held up the metal carrier straps. "Don't want to kill the lot of us, do you?"

"Not likely," said Muldoon. He meant it. In his own simple way he admired these men, admired them very much.

Norman Langster entered Muldoon's cabin without ceremony. It was small like the majority of the cabins on the satellite, but unlike the others it was also untidy. His eyes swept over the array of personal belongings

scattered on the floor—a sight that caused him to frown ominously. Muldoon stood up as he came in.

"All right, sit down! Blast you!" said the Director. He felt uncomfortable with that huge carrot-haired oaf towering above him.

Muldoon sank back on the edge of his berth. Slightly to his left, a half exposed rivet jutted from the bulkhead and the panel around it was discolored by a rusty crescent-shaped stain. Magazines and film tapes lay piled in haphazard disorder on the unmade bed. A dirty towel was draped across the back of the cabin's only chair and the dressing table was littered with parts from an abandoned electric motor. The impression was one of indescribable chaos. Yet the Director was curiously aware that some object he had come to regard as a permanent fixture was unaccountably missing. For the life of him, he couldn't remember what it was. It kept bothering him.

Rapidly he got a hold of himself: "Look here, Muldoon," he said sternly, "Briggs and Mortimer tell me you've been up to your old tricks again."

Muldoon favored him with an engaging grin. "Now, why should they be saying that?" he exclaimed with surprise. "I only patted them on the bottom."

"You great blundering fool," roared the Director. "Can't you get it into that thick skull of yours that you're as sterile as

Langster. "A very important job, too. Science is so exact these days—a milligramme can make all the difference." He began to move towards the door. Muldoon clambered hurriedly to his feet. "Now, don't forget what I told you about the ladies," the Managing Director admonished him. "Leave them alone!"

With his hand on the door latch, Langster paused and looked back. "You'd better get this cabin tidied up as well," he remarked. "It's a disgrace." His glance took in the stain round the loose rivet on the bulkhead and he remembered what he'd subconsciously forgotten a moment before: "Where's your lucky horseshoe?" he asked. Muldoon shuffled uneasily.

"Lost it, I suppose!" the Director laughed airily as if he were humoring a child.

"No, I haven't lost it," said Muldoon. "You see," he went on, finding it difficult to express himself, "they needed it more than I did."

"And who are 'they'?" inquired Langster.

"The guys on the starship," answered Muldoon simply.

The Director's interest quickened: "You gave it to a member of the crew, then?"

"Well, not exactly," said Muldoon. "You see, some people don't believe in things like that. They just laugh at you. Though, as I've often told them," he continued hastily, "it's always done all right by me. Now, there was one time when . . ."

"Yes, yes," Langster interrupted. "Just stick to the point and get on with it, man. What did you do with the horseshoe?"

Muldoon felt aggrieved. He rather liked that particular story and had, in fact, improved on it a little. "I was telling you," he went on. "It was like this. I didn't want to upset any of the guys, so I just slipped it on board when I was doing the cleaning."

The Managing Director's face took on a chalky whiteness. "You did what?" he gasped. Muldoon regarded him sympathetically: "There's no need to worry," he said. "It won't get in anyone's way. I hid it behind the extinguisher unit. No one will even see it."

Norman Langster stifled an urge to scream. Gritting his teeth, he asked one final question: "What's it made of?"

"The horseshoe?"

Langster nodded.

"Oh, it's not valuable," said Muldoon. "It's only a piece of iron."

For perhaps five seconds the Director retained control. Then something snapped. "You interfering lunatic!" his voice rose to a shrill falsetto. "Can't you understand what you've done? You've killed the whole bloody lot of them!"

Muldoon shrank back, stunned and perplexed before the sudden onslaught of rage. Oh, God, he prayed silently, I didn't mean any harm. You know I didn't. I

only meant it for the best. His eyes began to swell with tears.

The sight of him whimpering like a frightened animal, helped to pull Langster together. He was stirred by a strange compassion, something he had never previously experienced. "I'm sorry," he said gruffly. "I didn't mean it. It's not your fault, it's mine. You can't be expected to understand." With a brief gesture of apology, he stepped out into the corridor.

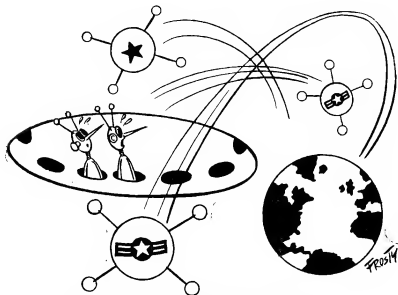
His own cabin stood nearby and he walked there automatically. It was a large cabin, ten

times the size of Muldoon's, and spotlessly tidy. He sat down behind the desk.

They'll know by now, he reflected, thinking of the six men on the starship. Doomed. And all because of a useless lump of metal. He wondered what it felt like to be stranded a thousand light years from nowhere, to be lost forever in the immensity of space itself. Wearily, he reached for the desk-mike.

With the calm, assured dignity of the Grade One man, Norman Langster dictated his resignation.

#### THE END



"Let's get out of here before we get killed."

the rest of us? Give the ladies a rest, for God's sake!"

"Sometimes I'm thinking there's been a mistake," said Muldoon equably.

"Don't talk nonsense," replied Langster. "There's been no mistake whatsoever. It's simply that you're making no effort to control an outdated instinct. It's nothing more than a straightforward reflex behaviour pattern, as you know damn well. You've had it all explained to you a dozen times."

"It doesn't feel like a behaviour pattern," asserted Muldoon stubbornly. "Just because you're Grade One and I'm Grade Six . . ."

"Shut up and listen to me," Langster cut in. "Heaven knows why I had you sent up here in the first place! But bear this in mind. We're a small community and it's my task to see that we function properly. To do that, we must have discipline—we've got to work together—and I'm not having one man destroy the whole set-up with an orgy of primitive back slapping. Get it? You'll behave like everyone else or you'll go back to Earth on the next shuttle. Will you get that into your thick skull?"

"You're all against me because I'm Grade Six," Muldoon persisted. He was unable to grasp more than one point at a time. "People say we're finished," he blurted out. "I've heard them. But it's not true, I tell you. Why, no one else on this hulk could have carried those

ballast boxes across eight galleries!"

The Director gave a groan of despair. "I'm not questioning your usefulness," he went on more kindly. "You know as well as I do that our births are controlled by order. The incubators are regulated by the law of supply and demand. You have your part to play, I have mine. Maybe there are fewer openings for the manual laborer nowadays, but I doubt very much whether we can dispense with your kind altogether. So there's no reason to indulge in a persecution complex."

Muldoon brightened. "You should've seen the little guy on the ship when I handed him the boxes," he announced. "Almost fell over, he did." He chuckled happily.

Watching him, Norman Langster felt a twinge of real emotion. There was a mute, overwhelming appeal which stemmed from the basic simplicity of the man. They'd been wrong, he thought with regret, they should not have destroyed the Grade Six incubators. He remembered that his own signature had been on the petition.

"We're not stupid," said Muldoon. "Honest, we're not. I watched the ship leave. I know how important that trip is. Faster than light. You wouldn't believe it, would you? I cleaned it myself with a vacuum sucker—clean as a new pin."

"I'm sure you did," replied

# HYPNOTISM OVER TV— *Watch Out!*

By DR. ARTHUR BARRON

**M**OST authorities claim that one out of four persons is capable of becoming an excellent hypnotic subject. Such persons achieve deep-trance easily. Less optimistic authorities claim that the proportion of real "hypnotizables" is more like one out of ten. Whatever the actual proportion, one fact is almost indisputably clear. Suggestible people will be susceptible to hypnotic suggestion transmitted over TV.

## *Subliminal Projection*

Of all the techniques developed by science for the hidden manipulation of the human mind, subliminal projection is the most successful—and the most frightening. It may be described as the communication of a message to the subconscious—rather

"Of all the techniques developed by science for hidden manipulation of the human mind, subliminal projection is the most successful—and the most frightening!" So states Dr. Arthur Barron, doubly frightening because, the TV set, a possible mechanical hypnotist, has become a part of our way of life. Thus, Dr. Barron's analysis of this problem is of interest to every TV viewer throughout the land.

er than the conscious—mind. The technique is based on the psychological fact that the threshold of awareness is below the threshold of perception. Subliminal projection is accomplished by flashing a message over a TV or movie screen faster (1/250 sec) than the eye can consciously "see" it, but slow enough for it to penetrate the subconscious, where it acts more or less like a hypnotic "suggestion." Eventually, the subject receives a message subconsciously without realizing it has been sent.

In a recent experiment over the British Broadcasting TV network, the subliminal message "Pirie breaks world record" was sent to viewers. Though this was a nonsense message, several hundred viewers wrote in saying they had received it.

But only twenty actually recalled having "seen" it.

Actually, knowledge of the subliminal phenomenon is not new. It was first experimentally demonstrated as far back as 1863. By 1939 definitive articles had appeared in the professional psychological journals. But it remained for motivation researchers and advertising executives to develop a practical method of projecting the hidden images.

### *The Hidden Sell*

Most of today's interest in subliminal projection comes from advertising circles. In one much-touted experiment, for example, a motivation researcher reported that soft drink sales soared 57% as the result of projection of a subliminal message in a movie theatre.

Current experiments suggest that the subliminal technique cannot cause anyone to do anything against his will, that the effects of the suggestion vary greatly from person to person and from time to time, that the method is most effective in reinforcing other types of advertising, and that one type of subliminal persuasion can be cancelled out or weakened by exposure to competing types of persuasion. In some cases, subliminal messages have even produced actual irritation and resentment against the products advertised, especially where viewers did not like the product to

begin with. A certain degree of predisposition on the part of the viewer seems to be necessary before he will react to the subliminal suggestion. Even so, the method definitely makes the mind more vulnerable to covert persuasion than it has ever been before.

A quarter of a century ago, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, foreshadowed many of the newest inventions and sociological developments: contraceptive pills, tranquilizers ("happiness pills"), and sub-audio projection. The latter worked by means of sounds broadcast while the subject was sleeping, just below the threshold of conscious audio perception. A combination of "happiness" pills, subliminal projection and sub-audio persuasion could in Huxley's world, transform citizens into a herd of sheeplike creatures. George Orwell, in his book 1984, saw something like this occurring to transform a nation of restive, oppressed peoples into a will-less mass of non-revolutionary dictator-lovers. This, Orwell believed, is the real "wave of the future."

In a free society the results could be equally disastrous. It is highly conceivable that political candidates could be subliminally sold in the same way as merchandise.

Similarly, subconscious techniques could be used in conjunction with the familiar communist brainwashing process, with



vastly increased (and more permanent) success.

### *Beneficial Uses*

Like most inventions, however, subliminal projection also holds promise of good. When used with improved tranquilizers, sub-audio recordings and even hypnotic techniques, subliminal projection may prove extremely helpful in dealing with hysteria, anxiety neuroses or prolonged depressive psychoses. It is extremely doubtful whether any of these techniques can cure mental disease, but like hypnosis, they may well help the psychiatrist to get rid of some of the symptoms and allow him to treat the disease more effectively.

Students have long used tape recordings, played during sleep, as a means of boning up for exams. A few have tried hypnosis. One thing is sure: subconscious projection can impart information to the mind without any conscious attempt on the part of the student to "learn" the data. However, the receptivity of people varies to such a degree that the results are often not worth the trouble—or the danger of using such comparatively unexplored methods without competent professional guidance.

To many people, the most attractive possibility opened by subconscious persuasion is in the treatment and rehabilitation of criminals. Prison dis-

content, ferment, even riots could be cut down, according to some psychologists. And hidden persuasion might be employed to make certain "enemies of society" more adequately socially oriented.

Much of this is speculation today, though. The technical possibilities remain to be fully explored. Besides, there is an extremely important social question which remains:

Should a free society attempt to control men's minds?

Some advertisers and educators have pointed out that we already try to "control" citizens' minds, in fact—that we educate, condition and even propagandize our people whenever the objective is "socially desirable." Motivation researchers go one step further: in order to sell a product, they will recommend that the company use packaging or advertising designed to exploit "subconscious" urges. Thus Detroit is eager to know if its newest car will remind men of the mistress they have never had but have always subconsciously desired, or whether the car will be subconsciously associated with Hollywood-type glamor and sex appeal—of a type the tired housewife can safely buy. There are, in addition, many market researchers who are convinced that the Coca-Cola bottle is a mother's-breast symbol, a subconscious association which accounts for a great deal of the soft drink's sales appeal.

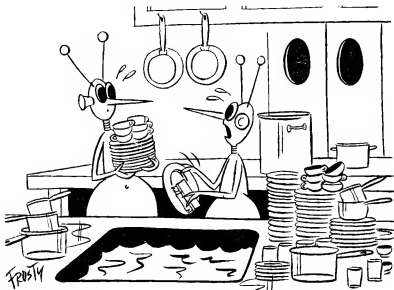
but one's subconscious morality—and this can be tricky and unknown ground.

Subliminal projection, on the other hand, is likely to have somewhat less success in influencing people's behavior. Viewers are not in a trance and they have not, consciously at any rate, agreed to follow any suggestions given them. The strong bond between hypnotist and subject is lacking, and it is highly doubtful whether suggestions

will have anything like hypnotic power.

In any case, public sentiment against unseen behavior-influencing is reaching a point where it will force the advocates of the process to proceed slowly and carefully. Meanwhile, experiments are being pushed forward by competent psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists. One suspects its greatest use will not be in advertising, but in medical, psychiatric and social fields.

**THE END**



"The next time we eat in an Earth restaurant, let's bring Earth money."

# THE SPECTROSCOPE

by S. E. COTTS

WAR WITH THE GIZMOS. *By Murray Leinster. 156 pp. Gold Medal Books. Paper: 35¢.*

Mr. Leinster's name on a cover assures a reader that he is in competent hands. Unfortunately this particular book never rises above that minimum level of competence. The reader will be disappointed, and rightly so, not only because Mr. Leinster is an old "pro" in the field, but because many of the elements of a fine S-F story are here.

At first glance, the bare bones of the plot seem promising—deadly vapors had been killing livestock and wild animals; then they turned upon men. The number of deaths rose. The Government was convinced that the deaths were caused by disease, but those who had been attacked and survived knew that the enemy was not a germ but an intelligent organism.

When the author confines his story to describing the menace and the ingenious ways his key characters find to combat it, he is fairly exciting. Yet even here the general layout and treatment are reminiscent of Heinlein's classic, *The Puppet Masters*. But when the action slows down sufficiently so that the characters can exchange a few words, the book becomes a dreary matter indeed. Rarely have I seen such stilted and ludicrous dialogue.

Science fiction may be a specialized field, but it is still first and foremost fiction. The irony of the situation is that Mr. Leinster has written a book of vapors vs. people in which he has made the vapors real to us, but the people, only shadows.

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE. *By James Blish. 188 pp. Ballantine Books. Paper: 35¢.*

*A Case of Conscience* is definitely an intriguing novel. In a way, the ideas embodied in it are natural ones to be hashed out in science fiction. Yet a treatment of it was a long time in coming. No doubt the delay stems partially from the delicate and complex handling it would obviously require, for the battle between Science and Religion is as old as the respective ideas. Now James Blish has come up with his thought-provoking version of this conflict, but instead of presenting two opposing characters for his ideas on the matter, he has combined them in the person of a Jesuit priest who is also a scientist.

Father Ruiz-Sanchez is one of a four-man scientific team investi-

On the other side of the debate are men-of-letters, psychologists and politicians who argue that subconscious persuasion is dangerous, immoral and Un-American. Michigan's Senator Charles Potter, for example, urges the Federal Communications Commission to protect the public against subliminal projection of all sorts. These people point out that the great danger is that the viewer does not even know when he is being exposed, what he's being told to do or, later on, why he is seized with an irrational urge to rush out to buy a product he does not consciously want. Opponents of subliminal projection cite the experience of a recent Seattle, Washington, housewife who found herself in the kitchen making a cup of coffee after a sub-audio radio program, an action which struck her as strange since she never drinks coffee.

### *Recent Development*

Amid the furor of argument and counter-argument, experiments in subliminal projection go on. One movie (*My World Dies Screaming*), using hidden horror-messages, has already been made. Another, *The Turn of the Screw*, will be released shortly.

The TV networks, in contrast, have temporarily banned subliminal projection. One reason, according to TV circles, is that the technical problems have not yet been solved. To project a TV

image, at least 1/60 sec. is needed, far too long for subliminal, which works best at around 1/250 sec. The technical snags of TV will be eliminated soon, however, and then a new decision might conceivably be made.

In Washington, the Federal Communications Commission is actively examining the problem. All the probabilities point to some sort of ban on indiscriminate use of the process in public communication media. But so far no one has figured out how the ban should be implemented, and what sort of subliminal projection should be encouraged.

### *Hypnosis A Clue*

While no one can yet delineate the exact potentialities and limitations of subconscious suggestion, some good speculation can be made on the basis of a more fully explored field—hypnosis. When the hypnotist gives "commands" to a subject in a deep trance, these commands will tend to be carried out. Most authorities in the field believe that subjects will not perform acts against their moral standards or desire for self-survival. Unfortunately, however, the evidence on this score is not absolutely convincing, and there is always the chance that a subject may subconsciously want to do something which he would consciously never agree to do. In hypnosis, therefore, the question is not one's conscious,

gating an alien world, Lithia. As a scientist, his observations lead him to conclusions that would make him a heretic in the eyes of the Church if proved to be so.

This is a vastly simplified explanation of what is quite a complex novel. There are so many facets to pay attention to—the unfolding of the mysteries of Lithia; the interplay between the conflicting personalities and viewpoints of the scientific team there; the suspense during the growth of the young alien who has been brought back alive from Lithia; the picture of the subterranean cities that now constitute Earth; but most important, the priest and his tragic problem.

Mr. Blish is not equally successful on all the levels. But even these parts do not weaken the basic strength of the book. It is a pleasure to read an S-F story with a moral problem that does not force the solution down one's throat. An even stronger recommendation than this, however, is the marvelous exposition of character, that rarest of all commodities in the science fiction market today.

**INVISIBLE BARRIERS.** *By David Osborne. 228 pp. Avalon Books. \$2.75.*

This book presents an interesting hypothesis as to the outcome of the Cold War. The U. S., the Soviet and the other power blocs in the world have withdrawn behind their borders and surrounded themselves with walls of silence, turning to complete isolation as the answer to the threatened global conflict. Upon this very believable background, David Osborne has built a fine suspense story of a man who was led to risk his job and his life to unite all people again.

John Amory was the top director for Transcontinental Televideo. He was a gifted man and it should have been a challenging job, but it wasn't—the communication industry had its own security system to make sure that the public never heard any reference to the fact that other nations existed. With such a rigid censorship, it was impossible for Amory to be happy. The seeds of discontent were fanned by imported films, genuine attempts at dramatic art, smuggled across the barriers. His dissatisfaction with the hypocrisy of his job was already strong when he learned of the threat to humanity from the stars. All these factors pushed him over the dividing line that separates the passive malcontent from the active revolutionary.

There is unfortunately a trick ending that is too much of an "explain-it-all" gimmick, but until then the story is fast-moving and tautly written. And the descriptions of the censorship hierarchy in television are chillingly realistic.



# ...OR SO YOU SAY

Dear Ed:

Rating 100. Yes, that's how I feel about the June *Amazing*. The cover was very good, although I will say that the background should have been some other color. After all with yellow terrain a different background would have set off the cover better. The novel was very good also. I only wish it were longer. The other stories I rate in this order: "Mayhem Enslaved," "Red Moon Rising," "Daddy Fix?" "Space Is For Suckers," and last but not least "Prophecy Inc." I had to give this last place because the other stories were so good. In a lesser issue this would have placed second or third.

I think I will like this new character, Thundar. Of course he cannot compare with John Carter (should not form an opinion before I read the story, but John Carter is an all time great.)

You have had a UFO issue and are going to have a Shaver Mystery issue, so why not an ERB issue?

Ted Pauls  
1448 Meridene Dr.  
Baltimore 12, Md.

● *An Edgar Rice Burroughs issue would be great except that all the Burroughs material is under copyright and permissions are not being granted by Burroughs' estate.*

Dear Editor:

All in all the June issue was good. Robert Bloch's "Red Moon Rising" was good, but struck two false notes. For one thing, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic is *not*, by any stretch of the imagination, a synonym for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This geographical misnomer is on a level with, say, a Soviet writer referring to the United States as Texas.

Al Sevcik's "Daddy Fix?" is a brilliant story and in the best tradition of the short story. It seems a shame that Oscar Friend's "Today Is Forever" could not have been on the same level. The Friend story was disorganized.

Edward F. Lacy III  
P.O. Box 805  
Houston 1, Texas

● *It so happens a friend of ours does refer to the United States as Texas; a friend from Fort Worth.*

Dear Editor:

This is my first letter to a science fiction magazine, although I have been reading them for five years. First of all, your magazine is slanted toward juveniles. I know that they make up a part of your readers, but let's have some more mature stories. Next, I wish you would reprint the best of your old stories.

This is directed at the letter-hacks. Be quiet about getting Heinlein, Van Vogt, and Asimov. Sure they're all good authors, but Paul is doing all he can to get the best he can. He has good stories by good authors anyhow.

One thing I rarely see in this magazine is giving the artists credit. Valigursky is usually criticized more than getting the credit he richly deserves.

Why don't you use small print in all of your magazine and/or print the magazine all the way across the page like you do in the letter departments? Do you have a back issue department?

Phillip Lynch  
6950 Reynolds St.  
Pittsburgh 8, Pa.

● *No back issue department. Sorry.*

Dear Editor:

If your novels were three times as long as they are, you could classify them as novels. Since when do you call 22,000 words a novel. I'm for the success of any science fiction magazine. But let's do things honestly.

I doubt if you print this, and I doubt if you cease to call your "novels" novels.

Wm. N. Beard  
4740 W. Hampton  
Milwaukee 18, Wisconsin

● *Where did you get that 22,000 figure, Mr. Beard? Every novel we've run has been over 40,000 words except "Today Is Forever." That ran slightly less.*

Dear Editor:

Your June issue is strictly science fiction, especially in your reference to the University of New Hampshire sans engineering school. Even John Foster Dulles knows you are wrong, that is if he should ever read your publication.

F. A. Hill (Alumni '43 UNH)  
143 Purvis Drive  
Triangle, Va.

● *Our apologies to the University of New Hampshire and to you, sir. There were a couple of errors in the college report as attested by your letter and the one below.*

Dear Editor:

We have on hand a copy of the June issue of *Amazing* which included a survey of universities throughout the nation and in which was included a statement on the University of Oregon.

I am very anxious to know where you obtained the information that was used in that particular report which is on page 76. It states that the University could not accept any more qualified students in either the under-graduate school or the graduate school as long as present facilities prevailed. This is a rather serious misstatement of the fact. We can and will accept additional students and will be able to handle them quite well with the present facilities. It is true that we are asking the legislature for a new light science building which will enable us to expand the program considerably. But I think you are well enough aware of the nature of University facilities to know that there always is some elasticity which permits excellent instruction simply by making greater use of the classrooms hour-wise. In other words, we can very nicely simply expand on the numbers of hours in the day in which we offer instruction. Thereby gaining maximum use of existing facilities.

I realize that the error was no fault of yours but thought that I should call it to your attention. We were, of course, distressed to have this type of information published but realize that a retraction probably is not in order.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Willard L. Thompson  
Director of Public Services  
University of Oregon  
Eugene, Oregon

● *A correction is very much in order. Also our apologies. Please accept them.*

Dear Editor:

I was overjoyed when I picked up the current issue of *Amazing* today and found an article on the Colleges and Universities of the United States. I have wanted such a list of outstanding schools for several years.

However, I took the preliminary precaution of glancing through your list before buying the magazine and I did not buy it.

You list Missoula University for Montana. Through personal experience in attempting to cooperate in paleontological interests of



unexplored caves my estimation of their scientific-capacity is quite low. The State School of Mines at Butte, and the State Agricultural College at Billings have a much higher scientific caliber of both faculty and students. I find, in my travels, that Colleges usually have a higher scientific and intellectual caliber than universities . . . half of your list follows the heading: "State Universities and Colleges" yet not one college is listed.

Of what intellectual caliber is your magazine?

Basil Hritsco  
Box 416, Rt. 1  
Brodenton, Florida

● *You evidently misunderstood the aims of the college survey. We did not intend to classify individual schools. The survey was to discover whether or not science courses in schools are overcrowded. Your opinions as to comparative excellence may or may not be accurate. We have no way of judging.*

Dear Editor:

The launching of Sputnik III goes along with what I have to say about the public's lack of concern with Red technical advances. There was no wave of hysteria and as far as that goes it didn't raise nearly as much comment as the dog carrying satellite. It seems that a dog in a couple hundred-pound satellite arouses public indignation. A ton-and-a-half mechanized satellite is accepted passively. I agree with Puck when he said, "What fools these mortals be."

Peter Francis Skeberdis  
450 Bancroft Street  
Imlay City, Michigan

● *Absence of hysteria does not necessarily indicate lack of concern. We know many deeply concerned people who are too busy thinking to cry panic.*

Dear Ed:

Last year at this time who could have thought that the door to outer space would be unlocked by our Russian rivals—perhaps the science fiction fan with his unlimited and often pessimistic outlook on the future, or maybe the historian, who theorized the cycle of human events had reached the point where the Soviets would get the next home run, or perhaps the rocket expert who knew America was behind in the race for space.

It could have been either, or all three. But it wasn't.

Not even the most alert science fiction writer conceived the word "Sputnik," which has exploded its way into our vocabulary. (Oh,

we knew it was coming, and we wrote in fiction the "What if" results of the Communist world being first in space, but did we really expect them to do it? At least we hoped not.)

Yet the space age is dawning and more and more people are turning to science fiction for the answers. Why, they ask, were the Russians first? The newspapers are answering it; science fiction submitted an answer years ago.

Leaving out the s-f aspects of Sputnik, Vanguard and Explorer, (and the science fiction has come of age bunk) the satellites mean that the U. S. is falling victim of the worst enemies democracy ever encountered. And we have been falling fast. But the outlook is bright; we will catch up and soon pass them.

Then the Solar Age will come . . . And science fiction will attract more readers because more people will be engulfed by the daily events that made up *yesterday's* science fiction. And *Amazing* will have to have a broader policy on publication material. The broader the better . . . it would appeal to more people of the (present) day.

Of course there are the old fans—some who have wandered through the farthest reaches of space before men of science in America even talked of rockets to the moon. What of them, the true science fiction fans?

Please, Mr. Fairman, don't confuse the masses, appalled by the recent bold headlines and blaring newscasts into seeing science fiction for the first time—as a reality, with the s-f fans whose minds have always sought out the stars, and the unconventional, and always will.

Science fiction, because of the Sputnik, may, in the eyes of many, have come of age. And perhaps reality is catching up with science fiction as fast as we are gaining on the Reds in science.

But if s-f *has* come of age, and appeals to everybody like a contemporary novel or daily newspaper, perhaps it has been swallowed up by the present and is no longer fiction.

Science fiction cannot remain static. New worlds must be opened up, new dominions explored and writers must stay awake night and day to find the virgin science fiction plot.

Out with the college references; out with the broader concept of science fiction. If the population of America wants to find the most suitable college to send young Threchmorton, Jr. to let them read a college guide. (There's one down at the library and it's not written by Ray Palmer.)

If they want the inside dope on Sputnik let them read *Scientific America*. It's a good magazine. Of course *Amazing* will lose some readers to the newspapers, but it will keep and gain more science fiction fans. And what more do you want?

Ziff Davis can always start a science book, a special college directory appealing only to space fiends, or even a national newspaper.

Science fiction for science fiction, and science fiction magazines about science fiction. Leave the science readers to *Scientific America* and the news hounds to *Life*. Don't try to combine them and maybe the public will read all three. At any rate science fiction will soar.

H. R. Frye  
408 Alleghany Rd.  
Hampton, Va.

● *The argument about science fiction's definition, its obligations and responsibilities has gone on for years and will probably never be settled to everyone's satisfaction. We agree with several of Mr. Frye's points but not with all of them. In fact we seldom agree with everything anyone says.*

Dear Ed:

What I think *Amazing* needs is the type of authors and artists it had about three or four years ago. The covers had the necessary touch of realism rather than a pasted-on look, and the authors, as Sheckley, Sturgeon, Matheson, etc., were of the top vintage. Recently a story was illustrated by Wallace Wood and I think that more stories should be done by him.

If future novels are as good as "Sign of the Tiger" they should stay.

Kenneth Smith  
1604 San Jacinto  
Austin 1, Texas

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## GARDEN OF EVIL

(Continued from page 19)

halt against a magnetic bulk-head.

I reached her just before she fell, holding her tightly, comfortingly.

"Pamela," I said. "Eve . . ."

We reached Earth two months

later. A week after, I sent a form letter to the Interplanetary Authorities, notifying them that I was changing the name of our starship to the *Eden*. I had my reasons, and so did my wife.

**THE END**

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**434 S. WABASH AVENUE**

**CHICAGO 5, ILLINOIS**





SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL

# PARAPSYCHE

BY  
JACK VANCE

ILLUSTRATED BY KWESKIN

**BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE**

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# YOU WILL MEET—

**Don Berwick.** He searched for Truth beyond the grave.

**Art Marsile.** Faith rather than understanding guided his footsteps.

**Jean Marsile Berwick.** To her, death was a point of no return.

**Hugh Bronny.** A thundering combination of greed, brutality, and fanaticism.

**Iva Lee Trembath.** Her powers bridged the gap between life and death.

**Vivian Hallsey.** A newspaper woman who reported Truth as she saw it.

**Dr. James Cogswell.** A scientific light in the foggy half-world.

*All events, personalities, and places in this novel are fictitious, with the exception of Los Angeles. The seance sequences are modeled after actual occurrences; the general tone of spirit communication as described accords with actual instances. Theories and speculations are the author's own, although he assumes that other people, considering the same subject, have drawn similar inferences.*

*The author is no enemy of Christian ethical doctrine, as he has tried to make clear. But he cannot disguise his opinion of certain forms of evangelism. Hugh Bronny represents an unfortunate possibility of the "hard sell" technique in that direction, rather than any specific case. Thus a similarity exists here with Sinclair Lewis' "Elmer Gantry."*

*Captious readers may raise their eyebrows at the last few pages. Even the author's credulity is strained. Still—on the other hand—who knows? Perhaps such things happen all the time. Stranger things do.*

Jack Vance

### 1. Spook Party

JEAN MARSILE, fifteen years old, blonde and pretty, jumped at the chair where her father sat. "Boo!"

Art Marsile turned his head with provoking calmness. "I thought you were going out on a date."

Jean tugged at her blue jeans, smoothed the seams of her pale blue sweater. "I am."

"Where you going?"

"Out on a weenie-roast. We're going to the haunted house, because it's Hallowe'en."

From across the room came a snort of derision and contempt. Jean ignored the sound.

Art Marsile, tall, tough as harness-leather, parched and coffee-brown from years of Southern

California sunlight, looked Jean up and down with unconvincing sternness. "What haunted house is this?" he asked curiously while Jean finished getting ready.

"The old Freelock house."

"So now it's haunted."

"That's what everybody says. Ever since Mr. Freelock killed his wife."

"What everybody says, eh? Has anyone seen anything?"

Jean nodded. "Lots of people. The Mexicans who live down the hill. They say there's lights and noises."

From across the room came a mocking bray of laughter. "Stupid bunch of wetbacks."

Art Marsile turned a brief glance toward his son Hugh, the child of his first wife, then looked back to Jean. "You're not scared?"

Jean calmly shook her head. "I don't believe it."

"I see." Art Marsile nodded thoughtfully. "Who's going with you?"

"Don Berwick. And—" Jean named others of the party.

Hugh spoke from across the room, his voice rich with disgust. "They call it a weenie-roast. All they do is go up there and neck."

Jean performed an impudent dance-step. "We've got to neck somewhere."

Art Marsile grunted. "Just don't get in a jam."

"Father!"

"You're human, aren't you?"

"Yes, but I'm—well . . ."

Hugh said, "They go out in the country and drink beer."

"I don't either!"

"The guys do."

"I know they do," growled Art Marsile. "And you know how I know? Because I used to do the same thing. And I'd do it again if I could get some pretty young girl to go with me."

"Father!" cried Jean. "You're bad!"

"Probably no worse than Don Berwick. So you be careful."

"Yes, Father!"

The door-bell rang; Don Berwick, a stocky square-shouldered lad of seventeen, entered, spent a few minutes in civil small-talk with Art Marsile and Hugh; then he and Jean went to the door. Art followed them out on the porch. "Look here, Don. I don't want any boozing. Not when you're driving a car with Jean inside. Understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"Okay. Have yourself a good time." He went back inside the house. Hugh was standing near the door, at eighteen already taller

than his father. He was big-jointed and thin, with hands the size of steaks, his long bony face sour and mulish. "I don't see why you let her get away with it."

"She's only young once," said Art Marsile evenly. "Let her have her fun . . . You should be out yourself, instead of staying home complaining about other people."

"I'm not complaining. I'm saying what ought to be."

"What 'ought' she be doing?" asked Art in a dry voice.

"There's schoolwork."

"She can't do much better than straight A's, Hugh."

"There's the revival meeting to-night."

"That's where you're going?"

"Yes. It's Walter Mott preaching. He's a great inspirational leader."

Art Marsile turned back to his magazine. "Walter Mott the Devil-Buster."

"That's what they call him."

"If you get a kick out of hell-fire and damnation," said Art Marsile, "that's your business. I wouldn't go, I wouldn't make Jean go."

"If I had anything to say, she'd go, and like it. It would do her good."

Art Marsile looked at Hugh in a wonder which had grown rather than lessened over the years. "It would do you good to drink some beer and kiss a few girls yourself. But I wouldn't make you do it. I'm damned if I'll make anybody do anything for their own good."

Hugh left the room, presently reappeared wearing limp gray slacks and a black sweater with the block letter he had won at basketball. "I'm going," he said.

Art Marsile nodded, Hugh departed. Art read his magazine,



switched on television, watched a late movie, mind more on his children than the superannuated flickerings. Hugh might or might not be his own flesh and blood; Jean was the child of his second wife. His first wife had decamped with a hillbilly musician shortly after Hugh's birth. Hugh resembled the musician more than Art. Art knew nothing for certain, but tried to give Hugh the benefit of the doubt. The second wife had died in an automobile collision, returning from the New Year's Day Rose Parade in Pasadena. If Art felt grief, no one knew it. He worked his orange grove with all-consuming intensity; he prospered; he bought new land, he made money which he showed no disposition to spend. Jean and Hugh grew into adolescence, treated with as much fairness as Art was capable of. Since Art could not bring himself to show affection to Hugh, he tried to conceal his love for Jean. But Jean would not be fooled. She hugged and kissed Art, rumped his hair, and had no secrets from him.

Hugh lived in a different world. Hugh played basketball with tremendous zeal, joined all the school's organizations, became an officer in most of them. He bought a manual of parliamentary procedure, studied it with much more thoroughness than his mathematics texts. At sixteen Hugh had gone to an open-air evangelist rally, and from this time forward, whatever faint linkage existed between his mind and Art Marsile's disappeared.

Hugh worked summers in the orange grove. Art Marsile paid him scale for whatever work he did, and got his money's worth: Hugh was a hard and tireless

worker. With his wages he bought first a car, then a portable loud-speaker: a megaphone-shaped instrument, powered by a battery. "What on earth do you want that thing for?" asked Art. Hugh looked at the device as if he were seeing it for the first time. He made a list of the uses to which the instrument could be put: messages across the orange grove, emergencies and rescues, announcements at basketball games, talking to people in general. Art made the request that the implement should not be employed to address him, nor used at the dinner table to say grace—an innovation which Hugh recently had introduced into the household, and which Art tolerated with non-committal patience. Jean was less complacent and teased Hugh unmercifully, until Art quieted her. "If he feels he wants to say grace, it's his business."

"Why can't he say it to himself then? God doesn't need to be thanked every time we eat a meal."

"That's irreverent," Hugh remarked.

"It's not either. It's sense. If God hadn't arranged that we become hungry, we wouldn't have to eat. Why should we give thanks for doing something we have to do to stay alive? You don't say grace every time you breathe."

Art let them wrangle: why stop a good argument? It's something everybody's got to work out for himself, he thought. The argument had continued sporadically, Hugh's growing religiosity colliding with Jean's skepticism. Art kept his views to himself, intervening only when the argument became name-calling. And tonight, Hallowe'en, Hugh was off to a revival meeting and Jean to a weenie-roast at a haunted house.

Art expected Jean home around midnight, but at eleven she burst in the door, eyes glowing in excitement. "Father! We saw the ghost!"

Art rose to his feet, turned off the television.

"You think I'm fooling! We saw it! We really did! As close as from here to you!"

Don Berwick came in. "It's true, Mr. Marsile!"

"You kids been drinking?" Art inquired suspiciously.

"No, sir!" said Don. "I promised you I wouldn't."

"Well, what happened?"

Jean reported. They had driven up Indian Hill to the Freelock house, a desolate weather-beaten hulk, shrouded among cypress and ragged cedar, the doors hanging on their hinges, the windows broken. The original plan had been to build a fire in the fireplace, but the inside of the house was so dirty and unpleasant that the girls objected. The fire was built in the backyard, on a patch of gravel still bare of weeds. The supplies were unloaded, the girls spread blankets; the normal processes of a weenie-roast got under way.

Jean reminded Art of the Freelock murder: beyond question, a horrible affair. Benjamin Freelock, a crabbed old man of sixty, suspected his young wife, twenty-eight years old, of carrying on with his nephew. He gagged her, hung her by her wrists from a beam in the living room, presently brought in the corpse of the nephew, which he hung by the wrists six feet in front of her. He stripped both bodies, the living and the dead, of their clothes, then went about his normal business as a real-estate agent. Two days later he revived the barely-conscious wife, inquired

if she were ready to confess. She was unable to speak coherently. He poured kerosene over her, set her afire, and departed the house.

The house smouldered and smoked but failed to catch fire. A Mexican living in a shack a hundred yards down the road called the fire department. Freelock, apprehended, made a sober and detailed confession and presently died at a home for the criminally insane.

The affair had occurred five years previously. The house was abandoned and—perhaps inevitably—there was talk of haunting. Jean explicitly corroborated these reports. The group had been jocular, skylarking, inviting ghosts to the feast: all ostensibly casual and careless, but all inwardly thrilling to the spooky look of the house, and the memory of the macabre killing. Jean had noticed a flickering of red light at the window to the living room. She had assumed it to be a reflection of the fire, then had looked again. There was no glass in the window. Others noticed; there were squeals and squeaks from the girls. All rose to their feet. Inside the living room, clearly visible, hung a body, twisting and writhing, clothed in flames. And from within came a series of agonized throat-wrenching sobs.

At this point Art snorted. "Somebody was playing a trick."

"No, no!" Jean and Don both protested.

"We're not that dumb," said Jean indignantly. "Betty Hall and Peggy were hysterical—I admit that—and Johnny Palgrave wasn't any better. The rest of us were perfectly sensible!"

Don laughed shortly; Jean turned an indignant look on him. "We were excited," she explained.



Real or unreal, the shocking sight would be long remembered.

"Of course! Who wouldn't be? But it didn't interfere with our eyesight. Not mine! Anyway, that's not all. Don went inside."

"What?" Art was surprised. "You went inside? What for?"

"To investigate."

"You thought it was a trick, eh?"

"No. It couldn't have been a trick. All of us knew that. It wasn't only the flames and the groans—they were real but not *quite* real. It was a feeling. A kind of—well, I can't describe it. A sad lonely feeling, deep as a pit. A coldness—golly, I can't describe it. But it must have been what the woman felt while she was hanging, during the night. That place is *haunted*, Mr. Marsile!"

"So you went inside. Wasn't that kinda rash?"

"Maybe . . . But all my life I've told myself if I ever saw a ghost, I was going to walk right up to him, and check him. Tonight I got the opportunity." Don grinned. "It was like jumping into cold water."

"What did you see? You kids keep a man in suspense!"

"Well, we'd run back a ways, and were standing by the car. These two girls were still yelling, and Johnny Palgrave had fled. I came to life and went to the front door. I was scared. It was so strong I could hardly move my legs—but it seemed as if most of it was outside of me. The atmosphere of the place. I went up the front door, and told Jean to wait—"

"Oh," said Art. "You were there too."

"Certainly. I wanted to know too."

"Go on."

"We looked through the door. It wasn't quite as bright as it had

seemed through the window. A double-exposure sort of thing. But the fire was bright enough to see the other body hanging there."

"He was naked," said Jean primly, as if the apparition should have exhibited a greater sense of propriety then at that moment.

"We stood watching. Nothing happened. I went inside, picked up a stick, tried to touch the burning thing. The stick went right through."

"And then," said Jean, "everything faded. The groans and the fire. Everything."

"Hmmf. You're telling me the truth? You're not pulling your old dad's leg?"

"No, Father! My word of honor!"

"Hmmf . . . Then what did you do? High-tail it for home?"

"Heavens no! We hadn't eaten yet. We went back to the fire, and ate, and then we came home. Don's going back tomorrow night with a camera."

Art looked at Don speculatively. He cleared his throat, then said gruffly, "Mind if I come along?"

"No, Mr. Marsile. Of course not."

"You want to go back right now?"

"Sure, if you like."

"Can I come, Father?"

Art nodded. "You got clear once. I guess whatever's there ain't gonna hurt you."

## 2. Supernatural Quiz

THEY stopped by Don's house for his camera, then drove south into the country, through the sweet-smelling orange groves, past dim white houses. At the edge of the desert, they turned up Indian Hill. The road twisted and

wound, through sagebrush, half-wild oleander, scrub-oak. Ahead, in the light of a late-rising moon, stood the Freelock house.

"It's spooky enough," said Art.

He turned into the overgrown driveway. "There's where we parked," said Jean. "There's where we had our fire." The headlights picked out the circle of dead gray ash. Art stopped the car, set the brakes, took his flashlight from the glove-compartment.

They sat in the dark a few moments, watching and listening. Cricket sounds came out of the night; the half-moon rode pale and lonely through the ragged black trees. Art opened the door, got out. Don and Jean followed. They went to the patch of gravel, wan and gray in the moonlight. The rocks crunched under their feet. They halted, disinclined to make sounds so incongruous and intrusive.

"We were right here," Jean whispered. "See that window there? That's the living room."

They stood staring at the dark old house. Far away a dog barked, lonesome and mellow. Art muttered. "I've always heard that if you came out looking for these things, they never happen. They come when you don't expect them . . . I'm gonna take a look inside."

He went around to the front porch. The front yard was a waste of dead milk-weed stalks and feathery fox-tail, bone-color in the moonlight. Jean and Don came behind. Art mounted the steps, paused.

Jean and Don stopped. After a moment Don asked, "Do you feel it, Mr. Marsile? Something cold and lonely?"

"Yeah. Something like that."

Art continued more slowly. The

feeling of grief, of desolation, of precious remembrance lost and gone, grew stronger.

They entered the house. The room was dark. Was that a glow? A flicker of red? A whimper, a sob? If so, it came and went; the woe vanished abruptly. Art drew a deep breath. "That's how it was before," whispered Jean. "Only worse."

Art flicked on his flashlight. Don pointed. "That's the stick I used. That's where the thing hung."

Outside a car turned into the driveway: the State Highway Patrol. A searchlight swept up the steps, picked up Art Marsile on the porch with Don and Jean close behind him.

A trooper got out of the car. "Hello, Art . . . What's going on?"

"I'm trying to find out."

"We got a report of a disturbance up here, thought we'd take a look."

"I thought I'd look too."

"See anything?"

"Nothing I'd swear to. It's quiet now, that's for sure."

"Yeah. Well, sergeant told me to check." The trooper climbed the steps, flashed his light around the room. He turned back to Jean and Don. "You kids were in the bunch up here tonight?"

"Yes."

"You saw these ghosts?"

Don told him what they had seen. The trooper listened without comment, flashed his light around the room once again. He shook his head. "Looks to me like somebody was playing a dumb trick." He went to the patrol car. Hisses, crackling, a voice from the radio. He spoke into the microphone, made his report. "Well, I checked. I'll be on my way."

The patrol car backed out,

drove away. Art, Jean and Don went to their own car, followed. They drove down the hill in silence.

"What do you think, Dad?" Jean asked presently.

Art made a non-committal sound. "Lots of funny things happen in the world. I guess this is another of them."

"But you believe us, don't you?"

"I believe you, all right."

"But *why*?" asked Don. "Why should there be ghosts?"

Art shook his head. "Nobody knows, nobody seems to care. It's not fashionable to believe in ghosts. Let alone see them."

"I know what I saw," said Don. "It was *there*."

"But what was it?" asked Jean. "A spirit? A ghost? A memory?"

"It's just one of the things nobody knows the answers to—and doesn't want to know."

"I want to know," said Don. "There's got to be a reason. Nothing happens without a reason. *Some* kind of reason."

Art agreed. "That's what we're brought up to believe. But whenever there's something out of the ordinary, people shrug their shoulders and pretend it didn't happen. Miracles, things being thrown around a house, ghosts, apparitions, spirit messages—you read about 'em all the time. The newspaper prints the news, people read it, then go back about their business. I don't understand it. There's a big field of knowledge here—as big as all of science, maybe bigger. And nobody dares to look into it. There's thousands of people digging for pots in Egypt and counting the field-mice in Afghanistan . . . Why don't a few look into this other stuff? Is it because it's too big, too scary? Maybe they're

afraid to be laughed at. I don't know."

"I never knew you thought this way, Daddy," said Jean.

"Think what way?" asked Art. "I'm just a hard-headed working-man. When I see something I want to know why. And when something funny happens, I don't try to kid myself it doesn't exist . . . I'll tell you kids something I never told no one else. I don't want you spreading it either, you hear?"

"I won't say anything."

"I won't either."

"Well, you know what a dowser is? Some people call 'em water-witches."

"Sure," said Don. "They find water with a forked stick."

"Yeah. Well, I own quite a bit of land. Some good citrus land, some not so good. There's one tract I got out at the edge of the desert, about four hundred acres, dry as ashes. If I could get water, I might grow something, but it's out of the irrigation district. One day I heard of this dowser and hired him to walk over the four hundred acres. He walked back and forth and his stick bumped and jumped. He was kinda puzzled at first, then he said, 'Mr. Marsile, you drill here. You'll get water. It's about two hundred feet down, and you should be able to draw about twenty gallons a minute.' Then he said, 'Over here, if you drill, you'll hit oil. It's deep, it'll cost you money to reach it, but it's there. Lots of it.'"

"Daddy—you never told me this!"

"I didn't intend to. Not just yet. Anyway I went down for the water, I hit her on the nose at two hundred feet. I pump just about twenty gallons a minute. As for

the oil, I've had three geologists to check the ground. They all say the same. Nothing. Wrong formation, wrong lay of the land, the wind even blows the wrong way. I don't know. I can't get it out of my mind. It'll cost twenty or thirty thousand—maybe more—to run a test-hole . . . I could swing it, but I'd have to go into debt. I don't like to do that."

Jean and Don were silent. They passed through the main part of Orange City, crossed the Los Angeles freeway, and returned to Art Marsile's house, under the four big pepper trees.

"Come on in," Art told Don. "Jean can make us some hot chocolate. It's too late for coffee. We'd never get to sleep."

Hugh was sitting in the living room, reading. His feet, in black socks, were long and limp as dead salmon. "Where you all been?"

"We saw the ghost, Hugh!" Jean called out triumphantly.

Hugh laughed uproariously.

"It's true!" cried Jean.

"Of all the silly tripe!"

"Don't believe me then." Jean went haughtily into the kitchen to make hot chocolate.

Hugh, still grinning, looked at Art. "What're they trying to cook up?"

"They sure saw something, Hugh."

Hugh sat up straight in astonishment. "You don't believe in ghosts?"

Art said evenly, "I have an open mind. They saw something, that's for sure. Ghosts, spooks—what difference does it make what you call 'em? Nobody knows anything about the subject. The field's wide open."

Don said, "I wonder if there's anyplace you could go to learn about these things?"

"Certainly at none of the universities. None that I ever heard of, anyway. After all, what could they teach? Ghost-hunting? Mind-reading? There's not even a name for the subject."

Hugh laughed derisively. "Who'd want to take such ridiculous courses?"

"I would," said Don. "I never thought about it before, but it's like Mr. Marsile says; nobody knows anything about these things—and they're all around us. Suppose the government spent a hundred million dollars in research, like they did on the atom bomb? Who knows what they'd turn up?"

"It's not a proper field for investigation," said Hugh after a minute. "It conflicts with what the Scriptures tell us."

"It wasn't considered proper to teach evolution either," said Art. "I see now where the ministers are kinda swingin' around to sayin' maybe it's right after all."

"Not the real four-square preachers!" cried Hugh indignantly. "Nobody'll ever convince me I was descended from a monkey. And nobody'll ever convince me there's ghosts, because the Bible is against it."

Jean brought in the chocolate. "I wish for once, Hugh, that every time we're trying to talk you wouldn't bring the Bible into it. I know what I saw tonight, whether it's in the Bible or whether it isn't."

"Well, all this to the side," said Art, "it's an interesting subject. Everybody's interested in it. But everybody's afraid to look into it scientifically."

"I wouldn't be," said Don. "I'd really like to."

Art shook his head. "You'd find the going mighty tough, Don."

You'd need money, and nobody'd give you money. People would laugh at you. You'd be starting cold, from scratch; you'd even have to invent your tools. You've got such a big field you couldn't cover it all, and you wouldn't hardly know where to start. Does dowsing for water have any connection to ghosts? How does this telepathy business work? Can anybody read the future? If so, does that make time the same kind of stuff as telepathy? Is telepathy the same stuff as ghosts? Are ghosts alive? Can they think? Are they spirits or just imprints, like footsteps? If they're alive where do they live? What's it like where they live? If they give off light, where do they draw the power? There's thousands of questions."

Don sat silently, chocolate forgotten.

Hugh said huskily, "Those are things we were never meant to know."

"I can't believe that, Hugh," said Art. "Anything our mind is able to understand we got a right to know." He put down his cup. "Well, I'm gonna turn in. Don't you kids set up till all hours. Good night." He left the room.

"Golly," said Don, in an awed voice. "When you think of it, it almost takes your breath away—this tremendous knowledge that nobody knows."

Jean said, "There must be *somebody* studying it. After all, we're not the only people in the world with ideas."

"Seems to me I've read of a group in England," said Don grudgingly. "A society for psychic research. Tomorrow let's go to the library and find out."

"Okay. We'll start the Orange City Society for Psychic Research."

Hugh said coldly, "You ought to know better than talk like that. It's impious."

"Don't talk nonsense," said Jean crossly. "Why on earth is it impious to talk?"

"Because there's one authority on right and wrong—the Bible. If you sin and go to Hell, you suffer the torments of the damned. If you live a Christian life, you go to Heaven. That's the Gospel. There's nothing about spirits, or ghosts, or any of that other stuff."

"The Bible isn't necessarily right," said Don.

Hugh was astounded. "Of course it's right! Every word of it is right!"

Don shrugged. "Anyway, I'm going to check on this psychic research business. I'm going to be a scientist. I'm going to find out what ghosts are, what they're made of, what makes them tick. Nothing happens without a reason; that's common sense. I'm going to find out that reason."

"I am too," said Jean. "I'm just as interested as you are."

"It's evil knowledge," intoned Hugh. "You'll go to Hell. You'll live in eternal torment."

"How come you're such an authority on Hell and torment?" Don asked.

"I made my choice tonight," said Hugh. "I gave myself to Christ. I promised to preach the Holy gospel, to fight the Devil and all his works."

Don rose to his feet. "Well, that answered my question . . . Good night, Jean."

Jean went with him out to the car; when she came back Hugh was waiting for her. "Good night, Hugh," she said, and slipped past him. "Just a minute," he said.

"What for?"



"I want to warn you about what you're doing. It's evil." His voice took on volume. "There's enough wickedness in the world without inventing more. Don Berwick is going to Hell. You don't want to join him there, do you?"

"I don't believe in Hell," said Jean sweetly.

"It's in the Bible, it's the Holy Word. They that sin shall suffer fire and pain without end, the furnaces shall open for them, they'll be doomed forever. That's the Christian gospel."

"It's no such thing," said Jean. "I know this much: Christ was kind and gentle. He tried to get people to be decent to each other. All this talk about fire and torment is a lot of nonsense. And I'm going to bed."

### 3. Marsile's Folly

THE school year came to an end; both Don and Hugh were graduated. The Korean War had started; both Don and Hugh received greetings from the President. Hugh won a medical exemption by reason of his pitifully flat feet and his extreme height—he now stood almost seven feet tall. Don was drafted and assigned to a paratroop battalion. Ten months passed, and Don's mother received news that Don had disappeared in combat and must be presumed dead.

The years passed. Art Marsile prospered, but his mode of life varied little. Hugh studied at the Athbill School of Divinity at Lawrence, Kansas; Jean enrolled at UCLA.

Three years after Don's disappearance, Don's mother received an official letter from the Army Department in Washington, notify-

ing her that Sergeant Donald Berwick was not dead, as had been presumed, and shortly would be arriving home.

Two weeks later Don Berwick returned to Orange City. He was reticent about his war experience, but it became known that he had been an undeclared prisoner-of-war, that he had escaped from a Manchurian labor camp and had made his way to Japan. He looked considerably older than his twenty-three years; he walked with a faint hitch in his stride, and his face was much more firmly modeled than anyone in Orange City had remembered it: the forehead low and wide, the nose straight and blunt, the cheekbones and jaw pronounced, the cheeks hollow.

On his second day in Orange City he went to see Art Marsile, whom he found a trifle thinner, a trifle more leathery. Art brought out beer from the refrigerator, told him what news there was to be told: that Jean was making good grades; that Hugh had become an evangelist, and had changed his name, now calling himself Hugh Bronny—which had been his mother's maiden-name. "And what do you plan to do, Don?"

Don settled himself back into the couch. "You remember the night we went up to the Freelock house, Art?"

"Yep."

"I've never forgotten that night. Afterwards I did a lot of reading—all the books I could find on the subject. In Manchuria I had time to do a lot of thinking. I did it. I still want to be a scientist, Art—a new kind of scientist. I'm going to the University. I'm going to learn as much mathematics, psychology, biology and physics as

possible. I'm going to read a lot more. Then I'm going to apply scientific techniques to the so-called supernatural."

Art nodded. "I'm glad to hear that, Don. I'm going to ask you a personal question. How are you fixed for money?"

"Pretty good, Art. I got an awful whack of cumulative back pay. I'll go to school on the GI Bill."

"Good enough. If you run short, I've got lots of money. Whatever you need, it's yours."

"Thanks, Art. I'll sure call on you if I need help. But I think I'll make out pretty well." He rose to his feet and shuffled uneasily.

Art said gruffly, "Why don't you stay to dinner? I telephoned Jean you were here; she's due home in a few minutes."

Don sat down, a queer hard pounding under his ribs. Outside a car door slammed. Feet came running up the walk, the front door opened. "Don!"

"Seems like absence makes the heart grow fonder," observed Art Marsile grinning.

"Father, don't you look while I'm kissing Don."

"Okay. Just let me know when you're done."

Don applied for admission at Caltech, and was accepted. A year later he and Jean were married.

There was news from Hugh meanwhile. He had established himself in Kansas, and held weekly revival meetings in various parts of Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. Occasionally he sent home hand-bills: "Monster Rally. Fighting Hugh Bronny, Leader of the Christian Crusade."

On Easter of the year Don was to take his BS, Art drove out to Don and Jean's apartment in

Westwood. "I'm gonna make the jump," he announced as he came through the door. "In fact I already made it."

"What jump, Father?"

"Remember my telling you about the dowser, how he told me there was oil?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'm going to do some wild-cattin'. I had a good year, I can blow whatever it's gonna take. If I hit it, fine. If I don't, it's out of my system."

Don laughed. "Either way, it'll be interesting."

"That's how I figure," said Art. "The geologists say no, the dowser says yes. We'll see who's right."

"How long before you know for sure?"

Art shook his head. "They start down next month. They drill till they hit oil—or until I run out of money. Whichever comes first."

"Here's hoping," said Don. "If hope will do you any good."

"We'll all hope. We'll drink a toast," said Jean. "If Hugh were here we'd ask him to pray."

"Hugh *will* be here," said Art. "That's another thing."

Jean made a face. "I thought he was established in Kansas."

"Well, he's coming west," said Art in the level voice he always used in connection with Hugh. "He seems to be a pretty big man in his field now. They've got him booked for meetings all over Southern California. He's going to make his headquarters in Orange City."

"Father! Surely he's not going to move in with you!"

"It's his privilege, if he wants to, Jean. It's his home."

"I suppose so. But I thought that later, after Don got his degree, we'd move back to Orange City."

Art grinned. "When Don gets his degree, you two are going to the Hawaiian Islands. It's a present from me. By the time you come back—then we'll see. Things may be cleared up. Maybe Hugh's got other plans in mind."

But Hugh had no other plans in mind. He arrived in Orange City the next week, tall, gaunt and solemn, wearing a pale blue suit, a Panama hat on his craggy forehead. Art received him with decent cordiality, and Hugh took up residence in his old home.

The drilling on Marsile No. 1 began. Don finished his undergraduate studies and received his BS; he and Jean flew to Honolulu for the month's vacation which had been Art's present to them.

During their absence they received two short letters from Art: the drilling was proceeding slowly and expensively. Nothing at five hundred feet; in the second letter, nothing at twelve hundred feet, with the drills scratching slowly through hard metamorphic rock. He made the dry comment that Hugh disapproved of the venture, on the basis that the money being wasted on the drilling could be put to better use: namely, the Christian Crusade, an evangelistic movement which Hugh had founded.

The month passed; Don and Jean returned to Orange City. Art met them at the airport. His face was dour and drawn: Marsile No. 1 was still dry. "We're down to eighteen hundred," said Art glumly. "The rock gets harder and meaner every foot. And I'm running low of money."

Jean hugged him. "That's nothing to fret about. It was just a gamble—just a game."

"Damn expensive game. And I

like to win my games you know."

They drove to the old house under the pepper trees, walked up the iris-bordered gravel path, entered the house.

"Good heavens!" cried Jean in wonder. "What's all this?"

"Some of Hugh's publicity," said Art drily.

Wordlessly Jean and Don examined the placards thumb-tacked to the wall. Most conspicuous was a large photograph of Hugh Bronny speaking into a microphone, fist poised in grim exultation. Four placards bore a picture of Hugh with scarehead printing: "March in the Christian Crusade with Hugh Bronny!" "Hugh Bronny, the Devil's enemy!" "Sweep America clean with Fighting Hugh Bronny!" A cartoon showed Hugh Bronny depicted as a muscular giant. He carried a broom labelled, "The Fighting Gospel," with which he dispersed a rabble of half-human vermin. Some wore horns and bat-wings; others were characterized by bald heads, large hooked noses, heavy-lidded eyes; others were marked with the communist hammer-and-sickle. "Clean out the atheists, the communists, the deniers of Christ!" "Keep America pure!" cried another card. "Hear Fighting Hugh Bronny at the old-fashioned fundamental go-for-broke revival! Bring the children. Free soda-pop."

Jean finally turned back to Art; she opened her mouth, then closed it again.

"I know," said Art. "It's kinda crude. But—well, it's Hugh's business. This is his home, he's got a right to hang up what he wants."

"But you live here too, Father!"

Art nodded. "I can stand it. I don't like the things, but what's the

good of making Hugh take them down? That don't change Hugh, and it only makes things tough."

"Sometimes I think you carry tolerance too far, Dad."

"Now I don't know about that. Here comes Hugh now, I guess he's been asleep."

A door closed, slow steps sounded along the hall.

"He's changed quite a bit," said Art in an undertone.

Hugh came into the room. He wore an unpressed black suit, a blue shirt, a long gray necktie, long-toed black shoes. He seemed enormously tall, almost seven feet; his head seemed larger and craggier than ever; his eyes flamed blue from cavernous sockets. He had gained force since Don had seen him last—force and poise and intensity, and absolute assurance.

Hugh did not offer to shake hands. "Hello, Jean. Hello, Don. You both look well."

"We should," said Jean with a nervous laugh, "we've done nothing but lie in the sun and sleep for a month."

Hugh nodded somberly, as if frivolity and self-indulgence were all very nice, but that personally he could not afford the time.

"I'm glad you're here. I want to talk about this oil well business. Do you know how much money has gone into it?"

"No," said Jean. "I don't care."

"But there's no oil out there on the desert. That money could be put to a worthy Christian use. I could do wonderful things with it."

"No, you couldn't," said Art. "I told you once before, Hugh, I'm not putting any money into your Christian Crusade, whatever you say."

"Just what is a Christian Crusade?" asked Jean.

Hugh bent his head forward, swung his arms. "The Christian Crusade is a great and growing cause. The Christian Crusade aims to bring the power of the Bible against the evils of this earthly sphere. The Christian Crusade aims to make the United States of America a real Christian God-fearing community; we believe in America for the Americans, Russia for the communists, Africa for the Negroes, Israel for the Jews and Hell for the atheists."

"I don't plan to finance it," said Art with a feeble grin.

Jean turned to Don, made a small helpless gesture. Don shrugged.

Hugh looked from one to the other. "I hear you've just graduated from college," he said to Don.

"Yes, that's right."

"And now you're a scientist?"

"Not quite. I've acquired some of the necessary background."

"So now what will you do?"

Jean said, "Father, take us out to the oil well."

"Don't call it an oil well yet," said Art. "It's dry as last week's biscuits. Around Orange City they call it 'Marsile's Folly.' But if I strike—"

Hugh made an un verbalized rumble of disgust.

"—if I strike there'll be lots of sick people around here. Because I quietly bought up mineral rights everywhere in sight. C'mon then, let's go. Coming, Hugh?"

"No. I'm working on my sermons."

They drove east from Orange City. The dark green foliage of the citrus groves came to an abrupt halt, with the dun hills and parched vegetation of the desert beyond.

They turned off at a side road, wound between balls of dry tum-

bleweed and gray-brown boulders, then suddenly came on another dark-green orange grove. Art stopped the car, pointed. "See that tank and the windmill? That's where the dowsers told me to get my water. I got enough to irrigate that whole grove. Now look—" he started forward "—just around this little hill . . ." There was the derrick, the drill-rig, the drill-crew in sweat-stained shirts and hard hats. Art called to the foreman. "I don't see no gusher, Chet."

"We're down to shale again, Art. Better going than the schist. But not a whiff of oil. You know what I think?"

"Yeah, I know what you think. You think I'm pouring money down a gopher hole. Maybe I am. I got another four thousand dollars to blow. When that's gone—we quit."

"Four thousand won't take us much farther. Specially if we hit any more of that schist, or that black trap."

"Well, keep biting at her, and when she blows, cap her quick; I don't want to lose a gallon."

Chet grinned. "All the oil you'll get out of that hole won't come to more'n a gallon."

#### 4. The Questing Mind

THEY returned to Orange City.

Jean said grimly, "I know we're going to argue with Hugh the whole time we're here. Darn it, Dad, he's a fascist! Where did he ever learn such things? Not from you!"

Art sighed. "I guess it's just Hugh. He's got a good mind, but—well, maybe it's his funny looks that he couldn't apply himself normally. And now he's found a place where his looks help him out . . .

And it don't do no good arguing with him, because he doesn't listen."

"I'll try to behave myself."

But at dinner the argument started. Hugh insisted on knowing what field of investigation Don proposed to enter. Don told him, matter-of-factly. "I plan to study para - psychological phenomena—psionic research, some people call it."

Hugh frowned his great eyebrow-buckling frown. "I'm not sure as I understand. Does this mean you study black-magic, witchcraft, the occult?"

"In a certain sense, yes."

"It's all charlatantry!" said Hugh in vast disgust.

Don nodded. "Ninety-five percent of it is, unfortunately . . . It's the remaining five percent I'm interested in. Especially the so-called spiritualistic phenomena."

Hugh leaned forward. "Surely you consider that sort of study irreverent? Are the souls of the dead any concern of man?"

"I don't recognize any limitation to human knowledge, Hugh. If souls exist, they're made of some sort of substance. Perhaps not molecules—but something. I'm curious what that *something* is."

Hugh shook his head. "And how do you go about investigating the after-life?"

"The same way you investigate anything else. Isolate facts, check, reject. If there is life after death, it exists. Somewhere. If something exists somewhere, it can be examined, measured, perhaps even seen or visited—providing we find the proper tools."

"It's sacrilege," croaked Hugh.

Don laughed. "Calm down, Hugh. Let's talk without getting excited. You asked me what I was

interested in, I'm telling you . . . If it's any comfort to you, I'm not at all sure there is an after-life."

Hugh glared from his cavernous eye-sockets. "Are you admitting to atheism?"

"If you want to put it that way," said Don. "I don't see why you make it out a bad word."

"An atheist and a communist!"

"Atheist yes, communist no. The ideas are at opposite poles. Atheism is the assertion of human self-reliance, dignity and individuality; communism is the denial of these ideas."

"You are forever damned," said Hugh in a hushed sibilant voice.

"I don't think so," said Don reasonably. "Of course I don't know anything for sure. No one knows the basic answers. Why is everything? Why is *anything*? Why is the universe? These are tremendous questions. They aren't answered by replying, 'Because the Creator so willed.' The same mystery applies to the Creator. And if there is a Creator, I'm sure he's not angry when I use the brain and the curiosity he endowed me with. In other words," said Don, smiling, "I'm trying to tell you that I'm not a dragon or a vampire. I'm a man honestly and decently puzzled about life, thought and the universe. I may never know the answers, but perhaps I'll make a start at finding out."

Hugh rose to his feet, nodded stiffly. "Good night." He left the room.

Jean broke the silence. "Well, that's that."

"I'm sorry if I caused any family trouble," said Don.

"Nonsense," said Art. "I've always liked a good argument. Hugh's got no call to get his feelings hurt. You didn't call him

names or tell him he was damned."

"Hugh forgets that the constitution guarantees freedom of religion," said Jean indignantly.

Art chuckled, looked at the posters on the wall. "If this Christian Crusade really takes hold, Hugh'll change the constitution."

"He shouldn't use the word 'Christian,'" Jean said indignantly. "Christianity stands for gentleness and kindness, and Hugh is a bigot."

Art drew a deep breath. "I'm not proud of Hugh . . . I'm not proud of myself, because I raised him."

"Hush Father, don't be foolish. Let's talk of more interesting things. Like how we're going to spend our first million when Marsile No. 1 comes in."

Art laughed. "You and Don can go about your ghost-hunting. Me, I'm going to buy some nice pasture-land and raise race-horses."

A week passed, two weeks. Marsile No. 1 remained dry, and Art Marsile reached the end of his bank-roll. He returned to the house, grim and dusty. "Well, that's it," he said. "I paid off the rig. I blew what loose money I had and I'm not going into debt."

Jean soothed him. "You're perfectly right, Dad, and now we'll forget all about it."

Art looked around the living room. "Why the suitcases?"

"You know we planned to go today."

"You don't need to go anywhere. Your home is here, as long as you like living here."

"We like it, but we've got to get to work. And we can't commute to Los Angeles every day."

"And how are you going to set about going to work?"

"First," said Don, "I've got to

raise money. I'll apply for a Guggenheim fellowship. I'll make contacts at the Society for Psychical Research, and see if I can sell some ideas to the finance committee. Perhaps one of the universities will set up a study group, like the ESP section at Duke. There's a number of possibilities."

Art shook his head in gruff vexation. "If Marsile No. 1 came through, you wouldn't have needed to worry."

"I know, Art. I was pulling for it as hard as you were."

They took their luggage to the car. Hugh came to the doorway, and stood watching. Jean kissed Art, waved to Hugh. "We'll be out next week end, Daddy. Now you forget Marsile No. 1 and get back to oranges."

They drove to Los Angeles in a driving rainstorm, and returned to their apartment in Westwood. Jean ran up the steps, opened the door; Don struggled up with the suitcases. He found Jean standing rigidly in the middle of the floor. "What's the trouble?" he asked, putting down the suitcases.

Jean made no answer. Don went to her. "What's wrong, Jean?"

"Don," she whispered, "something terrible's happened. To Art."

Don stared at her. "Surely not. We just left him, not an hour ago . . ."

Jean rushed to the telephone, called Orange City. The bell rang and rang. No one answered. Jean put down the receiver, stood up. Don put his arms around her.

"I feel it, Don," she whispered. "I know something's happened."

Half an hour later the telephone rang. Hugh spoke in a harsh babble. "Jean? Is this you? Jean?"

"Hugh! Father—"

"He's dead. A truck skidded into him—on the way out to that crazy oil well—"

"We'll be right out, Hugh."

Jean hung up listlessly. She turned. Don read the news in her face. She told him. He kissed her, patted her head. "I'm going to make you a cup of coffee."

Jean came out in the kitchen with him. "Don."

"Yes?"

"Let's go see Ivalee."

He stood looking at her, coffee-pot in her hand. "You're sure you want to?"

"Yes."

"All right."

"Right now."

Don put down the coffee-pot. "I'll telephone to make sure she's not busy." He went to the phone, made the call. "It's all right. Let's go."

Half an hour later they rang the bell of a neat white house in Long Beach. Ivalee Trembath opened the door, a slender woman of forty-five with steady gray eyes and silky white hair. She greeted them quietly, with simple friendliness, led them into the living room. If she noticed Jean's drawn face and over-bright eyes, she made no comment. Don said, "How do you feel, Iva?"

Ivalee looked from Don to Jean, then seated herself slowly in an arm-chair. "Sit down." Don and Jean seated themselves. "Do you want to speak to Molly?"

"Yes, please."

Ivalee lowered her head, looked at her hands. She began to breathe in long slow breaths. "Molly. Molly. Are you there?" There was silence. Outside a car whirled past over the wet macadam. "Molly?" Ivalee's head sank, her shoulders sagged.

"Hello, Iva," said a clear bright voice from Ivalee's mouth. "Hello, folks."

"Hello, Molly," said Don. "How are you?"

"Fine as rain. I see you got a little rain down below too. We sure could have used it in 1906. What a sight that was, dear old Frisco! Reeking up in flames like rags in a bonfire. Well, well, I've seen lots in my day." Molly's voice faded a little; there was a murmur, then another voice said harshly, "Come, come, enough of this nonsense! We're not having any more of this peeking and prying."

Ivalee Trembath whimpered like a sleeping puppy, rocked back and forth in the chair.

"Who are you?" asked Don, calmly.

A torrent of words in a foreign language pelted from Ivalee's mouth—hard harsh gutturals that carried the sting of abuse.

Molly said good-naturedly, "Oh, get away, Ladislav . . . Silly creature—he's one of the bad ones. Always horsin' around."

Jean said in a husky whisper, "Is my father there?"

"Sure, he's here."

"Can he speak?" asked Don.

Molly's voice was doubtful. "He'll try. He's not strong . . ."

A second voice interrupted, a low gravel voice that rasped in Ivalee's throat; for a second or two both voices were speaking at once.

"Hello, Jean. Hello, Don." The voice was dim and distant.

"Art?" asked Don. "Are you there?"

"Yes." The voice was stronger. "Can't quite get the hang of talking through a lady. Well, I'm over here safe and sound, in spite of Hugh's predictions . . . Now don't you folks grieve. It's a little lone-

some, but I'm fine and I'll be happy."

Jean was crying quietly. "It was so sudden . . ."

"That's the best way there is. Now don't cry, because you make me feel bad."

"It's so strange to be talking to you like this."

Art's dry laugh sounded in Ivalee's throat. "It's strange for me too."

"What's it like, Art?" asked Don.

"Hard to say. It's kinda hazy just now. It's something like home in a way."

His voice faded, as if it were coming from a radio tuned to a distant station. Molly's voice came bright and cheerful. "He's tired, dear. He's not used to life up here yet. But he's fine now, and we'll look after him. He wants to talk to you again."

The voice changed in Ivalee's throat, becoming not Art's voice, but using Art's clipped intonations. "Say, down there. You know where we was digging?"

"Marsile No. 1?"

"Yeah. Well, we stopped too soon. I just kinda pushed my head down and took a look. Don't quit, Don. Keep going, because it's there."

"How far, Art?"

"Hard to say; things is a little confused. I've got to go. I'll be talking to you again sometime. Say hello to Hugh . . ."

Molly returned. "Well, that's all folks," she said brassily. "He's a nice man."

Don asked, "Molly—can I visit this land where you are?"

"Sure," said Molly. "When you die." And she chuckled. "Of course, we call it passing over."

"Can I visit your country while



"I'm alive, here on Earth?" he asked.

Molly's voice faded, waxed and waned as if winds were blowing. "I don't know, Donald. People like Iva visit us—but they always go back . . . I see that Ivalee's tired . . . So I'll be off about my business. Good-bye . . ."

"Good-bye," said Don

"Good-bye," said Jean, softly.

Ivalee Trembath raised her head; her eyes looked tired; the cheek muscles sagged around her mouth. "How was it?"

"It was tremendous," said Don. "It couldn't have been better."

Ivalee looked at Jean, still softly crying. "What's happened, Don?"

"Her father was killed tonight."

"Oh. Too bad . . . Did you reach him?"

"Yes. He spoke. It was wonderful."

Ivalee smiled faintly. "I'm glad when I can help."

"Thank you ever so much," said Jean.

Ivalee patted her shoulder. "You come to see me soon again . . . Do you still have the same plans?"

"Yes," said Don. "The same, only more of them. We'll start work as soon as we can."

"Tell me about it next time," said Ivalee. "You're anxious to go now."

"Yes," said Jean. "But I'm glad we came. Good night."

"Good night."

## 5. Stuck With the Occult

DON and Jean drove along the Freeway, through swift bright-eyed shoals of automobiles; past phosphorescent tangles of neon-tubing, filling-stations a-twinkle with banners and rotating glimmering tapes, cafes, bars, creameries, hamburger-stands, used-car

lots draped and festooned with electric light-bulbs—hundred thousand-watt effulgences along the street, like a row of monstrous incandescent jelly-fish. It was a splendor familiar to Don and Jean, a vibrant agitation of light and color and life to be seen nowhere else in the world; in any event their minds were elsewhere.

Jean said, "I don't know Ivalee as well as you do . . . I'm sure she's honest." She hesitated.

Don said, "She's more than honest. She's completely transparent. She's the most guile-less person I know. This is the fifth time I've sat at a seance with her. It was far and away the clearest and most direct."

"I wasn't questioning her honesty," said Jean. "But—do you think that was really Father?"

Don shrugged. "I don't know. It's possible that Ivalee unconsciously reads the minds of the people who visit her. That instead of spirits speaking through her mouth, she merely mirrors our own minds."

"But about the oil well—he said there's oil, to keep on drilling."

"I know. She wasn't mirroring my mind. Privately I've been skeptical of Marsile No. 1. Downers aren't infallible, no more than anyone else."

Jean nodded. "I've never believed there'd be oil . . . But now father, or his spirit—whatever it is—says there's oil. What shall we do?"

Don laughed grimly. "Drill, I guess—if you're willing to risk it. If we can raise the money."

"I'm willing to risk it . . . But there's Hugh to be considered."

"Had your father made a will?"

"Yes. The property is divided equally between Hugh and myself."

"There may be difficulties . . . Speaking of Hugh—look at that."

He pointed to an enormous billboard glaring under the illumination of six floodlights.

This appeared in red and black, on a white background, in heavy portentous letters.

## GREAT NATIONAL GOSPEL REVIVAL

Fight Three Great Evils  
with

Fighting Hugh Bronny  
Join the Christian Crusade

Keep America

Clean, White and Christian

Fight Communism

Fight Atheism

Fight Blood Pollution

Massive Revival at the

Orange City Auditorium

Two weeks starting June 19

A picture depicted Hugh as a rock-jawed powerful giant, a hybrid of Abraham Lincoln, Uncle Sam and Paul Bunyon.

Don shook his head. "I never suspected Hugh had come so far!"

"He's always been a worker . . . It's rather revolting, isn't it?"

Don nodded. "I suppose people must come to listen to him."

"Evidently."

They arrived at Orange City, and were immersed in the inevitable melancholy details attendant on Art Marsile's death.

Art was cremated, his ashes buried in the orange grove, without funeral or formal ceremony, in accordance with his wishes. Hugh protested bitterly, until Art's attorney and executor of the estate brought forth the will, and indicated a paragraph giving explicit instructions as to the disposal of his body.

As Jean had informed Don, the estate was to be divided between

Jean and Hugh, "in any manner mutually agreeable to the legatees." In the event that agreement could not be reached, the executor was instructed to sell the various properties of the estate at the highest possible figure and divide the proceeds between the legatees.

Jean, Don and Hugh discussed the situation the night Art's ashes were buried. There were nine parcels of property: the house, the four hundred acres of desert, and seven orange groves of various acreage.

Hugh had prepared a memorandum of the value of the various parcels, and was ready with a proposal. "I suggest that you keep the house, since my work takes me far afield, and I have no need of it. To compensate, I will take the Elsinore Avenue grove, which is roughly the same value. These other groves we can divide like this." He explained his plan. "The four hundred acres is worthless and I propose that we sell it and divide the proceeds."

Don said, "It's only fair to tell you, that we have reason to think there is oil on the property."

Hugh frowned. "What sort of reason?"

"A reason you may or may not take seriously. On the night Art died we stopped by the house of a friend, who is also a medium. While we were there, a voice, purportedly Art, spoke to us. The voice told us that there was oil on the four hundred acres, to proceed with the drilling."

Hugh chuckled hollowly. "And you are superstitious enough to give credence to this 'voice'?"

"Superstition is belief in something non-existent," said Don. "This voice existed. I heard it. It sounded like Art. Jean and I are

willing to take the chance it was Art."

Hugh shook his great head slowly. "I can't agree with you."

"In any event," said Don, "I suggest that we sell one of the groves and use the money to continue drilling. It's a gamble, yes—but most of the hole is already there."

Hugh shook his head once more. "I have much better uses for money than pouring it into a hole."

"Very well," said Don. "You take the Frazer Boulevard Valencias, we'll take the four hundred acres, and we'll split the other parcels according to your system."

Hugh considered his list. "Very well. I agree. I hope that I may be allowed to reside in the house during my stay in Orange City?"

"Of course," said Jean. "If you'll please take those posters and placards off the wall."

Hugh rose to his full seven feet. "As you wish," he said coldly. "It is your house."

The division of the property was accordingly made. Don and Jean sold thirty-three acres of oranges, called the drill-crew back to work.

"Good money after bad?" inquired the foreman with genial good humor. "Take my advice, Mr. Berwick, don't waste your money. This just ain't the right formation. We've passed the Granville Blue shales—that's where the Rodman Dome came in—and according to the geology you'll be hitting granite in another five hundred feet."

"We want to see that granite," said Jean. "Drill on, Chet, and be ready to cap it when it comes."

"Yes, ma'am."

Three days later gas began blowing up the hole, and on the

fourth day Marsile No. 1 came in.

Chet said sheepishly, "I gave you good advice. You shoulda took it. But if you had, you wouldn't be millionaires like you're gonna be."

## 6. Hugh's Tirade

AT TEN O'CLOCK in the morning Hugh came into the living room, wearing a cream-colored suit, long pointed yellow shoes. Jean looked up from the arm-chair where she had been sitting, lost in thought. Hugh put his Panama hat gently on a chair, slapped his leg with a newspaper.

"Well, sister," he said jocularly, "oil on the property, after all. Why didn't you let me know?"

"You weren't here when the news came."

"No. I was working with the Reverend Spedelius. It's wonderful, wonderful! God's gift to us. And we'll put it to God's work."

Jean sat up in the chair, a faint cool smile on her face. "What sort of fantasy is this, Hugh?"

"Fantasy?" He held up the newspaper. "Surely this is true?"

"We struck oil on the four hundred acres, yes."

"Then we're rich."

"It was the four hundred acres you didn't want, Hugh."

Hugh laughed hollowly. "What's the difference? Perhaps I spoke unthinkingly—but I'm sure that our father intended us to share. That was the tone of his last will and testament . . ." He looked around the room, picked up a book. "'A Compendium of Supernormal Phenomena,' by Ralph Birchmill." He dropped it as if it were hot, glanced at Jean. "I don't see the Holy Bible in the room," he said, heavily jocose. He settled his great gaunt frame on the couch, knees

almost as high as his chest. Don came in, sat down near Jean.

"Our father always insisted on an equal sharing of the good things," said Hugh. "I assume that we will continue to do so."

"Not in this case," said Jean. "You're a moderately well-off man right now, with your orange groves."

Hugh's hand slowly clenched on the newspaper. But his voice was gentle and low. "True, sister. But I have a need for money beyond mere material needs. I'm pledged to the furtherance of God's will, to spiritual enlightenment of the people, to the Christian Crusade."

"I'm sorry, Hugh. We've decided to put the money to other uses."

Hugh held out his hands ingenuously. "What use could be more important than spreading the Gospel?"

"It depends on your point of view. We plan to endow a research foundation."

"You mean this black magic, devil worship, occultism stunt?"

Jean said impatiently, "You know very well we neither practice nor believe in black magic or devil worship."

Hugh glanced meaningfully at the book on Don's desk. He rose restlessly to his feet, paced back and forth across the room. "Exactly what kind of research do you intend, then?"

"I'll be glad to explain," said Don politely. "We want to bridge a very large gap in human knowledge. We want to attack what is commonly known as the supernatural with laboratory techniques. We want to make a large scale investigation of spiritualistic phenomena, with an eye to proving or disproving the existence of spirits, and perhaps the whole con-

cept of the hereafter you see."

Hugh stood back with an exaggerated gesture of alarm that nearly bumped his head on the door lintel. "Proof of the hereafter? Isn't that rather beside the point? And presumptuous? Don't you read your Bible?"

"I don't care to argue theology with you," said Don. "You asked me a question; I answered you."

Hugh nodded. "Very well. I'll ask another question." He strode across the room, looked down at Jean. "This money, which you have acknowledged to be partly mine—do you intend to give it to me?"

"I haven't acknowledged it as partly yours and I don't intend to give you any."

Hugh nodded again. "Do you have the effrontery to suggest that this hocus-pocus is more important than the Christian Crusade?"

Jean, leaning back in the chair, looked up at him coldly. "Last night we went to your revival meeting. We listened to you. Do you know why?"

"Of course I don't know why. Unless—"

"No. We weren't planning to throw ourselves before the altar. We suspected that this matter would come up, we wanted to hear you, with our own ears. We heard you."

Hugh looked from Jean to Don, back to Jean. "Well?"

"I'll speak with complete frankness," said Jean.

"Of course," said Hugh stiffly.

"There's no point beating around the bush, or using ambiguous terms because they're more polite. So—to be brutally blunt—I think you're a fascist. You call yourself a preacher; you preach hate. You cloak your hatred in

sanctimony, you bring out the worst in humanity. You asked people to come up and grovel, abase themselves for their sins—imaginary or otherwise. If there is a Creator, I'm sure you don't speak for him."

Hugh said ponderously, "That is not the truth. I preach the Lord's word."

"Whatever you call it, you sickened me. I won't let you go hungry, but I'll never give a cent to your Christian Crusade."

"Very well," said Hugh. "But what about the wishes of our father? He instructed us to divide the estate fairly between us." He held up his great hand. "I know what you're going to say. But surely you had secret information. You did not deal fairly with me."

"I gave you every bit of information we had," Jean said indignantly.

"You couldn't expect me to believe that story—about the medium," bleated Hugh.

"We took our chances. You refused to take yours. As far as I'm concerned the subject is closed."

Hugh danced back, stood with his fist in the air. "Very well! I warn you that I intend to fight you and your blasphemous program in every possible way. The money came from the minerals God put into the earth; you should not use it to derogate the Word of God!"

"Why not let God do his own worrying?" Jean wearily asked. "He can stop it anytime he wants with a thunderbolt."

"I am moving out of this sacrilegious place," cried Hugh. "I don't want your money. It stinks of the Devil!" He backed away. His voice boomed and rasped. "You will know punishment, you will

know death and the awful agony of the hereafter!"

"Please go, Hugh."

Hugh departed. "He's a madman," said Jean. "Or—is he?"

Don was pulling Hugh's placards off the wall. "Filthy things . . . I don't know."

Jean put her arms around him. "Don—I'm afraid of Hugh."

"Afraid? Physically afraid?"

"Yes . . . He doesn't care what he does."

"I'm not so sure," said Don lightly. "I think he rather enjoys these dramatic scenes . . . But—I hope we don't see too much of Hugh. He's very wearing."

## 7. A Meeting With the Spirits

AT FIVE O'CLOCK in the evening the telephone rang. Jean answered, turned to Don. "It's a reporter from the *Los Angeles Times*."

"Let's talk to her. Publicity can't hurt us, and might do us some good."

Jean turned back to the phone, and twenty minutes later the reporter appeared at the front door. She gave her name as Vivian Hallsey—a young woman of twenty-five, not quite plump, with a round freckled face, alert eyes, a button-nose and dark red hair, tightly curled. She stood in the doorway, looked from Don to Jean, smiled. "You certainly don't look as I expected you to look."

"What did you expect?" asked Don.

Vivian Hallsey shook her head. "Anything other than normality."

Jean laughed. "Why shouldn't we look normal?"

"I'm prejudiced," said Vivian Hallsey. "I understand that you were led to drill this oil well by

communication with the spirit world. I've always thought that only neurotic old women patronized mediums and fortune tellers."

"Be that as it may," said Don. "Will you sit down?"

"Thanks. How *did* you find where to drill for oil? If it's through a spirit, which spirit? Because I'd like an oil well myself."

Don explained the circumstances which led to the tapping of Marsile Dome.

Vivian Hallsey looked around the room and shivered. "It makes me feel strange."

"What makes you feel strange?"

"The idea of spirits—everywhere. The spirits of the dead. Watching you. We're never alone. It's as if we all lived in glass cages . . . It's embarrassing!"

"Not so fast," said Don. "We still can't be sure."

"Sure of what?"

"That spirits exist. It's a pat answer."

"'Pat answer!'" She looked at him incredulously. "You tell me this? You're the one who just brought in an oil well, with the help of spirits."

"I know," said Don. "That's the supposition. But it's possible there are other explanations."

Vivian Hallsey clutched her head in exasperation. "Exactly what *do* you think?"

"I don't know. We're going to spend the next few years finding out. Maybe the rest of our lives."

"I never believed in life after death before. You convince me, and then the next minute you try to un-convince me."

Don laughed. "Sorry. But it just might not have been life after death."

"I don't see how you can say that!"

"Ivalsee Trembath might be highly telepathic. Without conscious effort on her part she might have been reading our minds—telling us things we wanted to believe."

Vivian Hallsey was silent a moment. "It all seems so fantastic . . . Isn't it more likely the other way?"

"I don't know. I'd like to know. If there is another world—it exists. That's just logic. If this other world exists, it exists *somewhere!* That's important. 'The Land of Nod' for instance—a figure of speech, meaning sleep. It exists—nowhere. Perhaps the after-life is also a figurative expression—something like the 'Land of Nod.' But if it *does* exist, I want to learn the truth. I have a right to know. Humanity has a right to know."

Vivian Hallsey looked doubtful. "Human beings derive a great deal of comfort from the hope of an after-life. Isn't it cruel to take that hope away from them?"

"Possibly," said Don. "New knowledge always comes as an uncomfortable shock to many people. And of course it's perfectly possible we might prove the reality of an after-life."

"You use the word 'proof,'" said Vivian Hallsey. "Just how do you go about getting this proof?"

"The same way scientists try to get proof for any other matter in doubt."

"But how do you start?"

"First with a little deep thought. The problem is how to get evidence—scientific evidence—and parapsychology is a hard field to get definite evidence in."

"Why is it so hard?"

"First, because the subject-matter is so far out of reach. Second, good mediums are awfully scarce."

Ivalee Trembath is one in a million. There probably aren't twenty people in the United States as efficient as she is. Incidentally, please don't use her name, as she isn't a professional medium—just a gifted woman who is interested in the subject. Third there are thousands of convincing charlatans, and even more thousands of unconvincing ones. Fourth, good mediums are sensitive. Some of them are jealous of their gifts and don't want anyone investigating. Others resent laboratory checks. They think it's a reflection on their integrity."

"But surely there are mediums who'll cooperate."

"Oh, yes. With money anything is possible. There'll be lots of hard work involved, lots of sweat! If we got about a dozen mediums and held twelve simultaneous seances . . ." He paused.

"What would that prove?"

"I don't know. The results might suggest something. We've got to start somewhere."

"Would these simultaneous seances prove or disprove the after-life?"

"So far as I know," said Don, "nothing a medium does or says has completely ruled out the possibility of telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, retrocognition, telekinesis. These of course are hyper-normal—but they don't prove survival after death."

"How about ghosts—and things like that?"

"Ghosts," said Don. He looked at Jean. They both laughed.

"Why are you laughing?" Vivian Hallsey asked.

"Ghosts are how Jean and I became interested in parapsychology. It happened a long time ago . . . I wonder if the old Freelock place is still haunted . . ."

"What happened?" asked Vivian Hallsey. "Darn it, you're getting me interested. If I'm not careful—but never mind me. What happened at the Freelock house?"

Don told her.

"Do you think this ghost and the spirit which told you to dig for oil are the same sort of thing?"

"I don't know. I suppose they have certain qualities in common—assuming that the spirits aren't merely telepathic transferences. Even then there might be a connection. It's another thing we'll be checking. So far I haven't gone into it deeply. Various regions of the world have their unique type of ghosts. Very odd, when you consider it. You'd think a ghost in Siberia would be the same as a ghost in Haiti."

"Unless, of course, they're all hallucinations."

Don nodded. "With that proviso, of course. The degree of evidence for English ghosts, for instance, is stronger than the evidence for Irish fairies. The were-wolf is confined to the Carpathians and Urals. Although there are were-tigers in India, Malaya and Siam, and were-leopards in Africa. Kobolds and trolls live in Scandinavia, duppies and zombies in the West Indies. The Onas of Tierra del Fuego knew a terrible thing called a 'tsanke.' Assuming that these supernatural creatures exist, or at least are seen—isn't this localization suggestive?"

"Of what?"

"You think about it."

Vivian Hallsey laughed. "Are you trying to make a new convert?"

"Why not?"

"All right. You've got one. But now I've got to write a story on all this. One more question: what

will you call this research foundation?"

"There's only one name possible," Don told her. "The Marsile Foundation for Parapsychological Research."

### 8. Calling All Mediums

EIGHT more wells were sent down to tap Marsile Dome, and owners of adjacent property who had given up options and mineral rights gnashed their teeth in frustration. Representatives of six major oil companies approached Don and Jean Berwick with propositions of varying attraction. After six weeks of study and legal consultation, Don and Jean sold out to Seahawk Oil on a cash-royalty-stock transfer arrangement, and at last were able to devote their time to the Marsile Foundation for Parapsychological Research.

But there were still other delays. The mechanics for organizing the Foundation were more complicated than Don and Jean had anticipated. To qualify for tax-exemption benefits the Foundation was incorporated as a non-profit research institution, capitalized at a million dollars. "At last," sighed Jean. "We can get started. But how? We still haven't decided on a thing. Not even on where to establish ourselves."

"No," said Don, thoughtfully. "An institution with such an imposing name deserves an equally imposing headquarters—something concrete and glass, spread out over an acre—but how we'd use it at the present time—I haven't the slightest idea . . . We'd better try to organize a staff, work out a systematic program, and then we'll know better what kind of facilities we'll need." He picked up a letter

from the table. "We should get some help here. This is from the American Society for Psychic Research. They're interested in coordinating programs. One of their associates is coming out to see us."

"That would be fine," said Jean. "Except that we don't know their program. We don't even know our own."

"But now we get down to business." Don took a notebook and pen, then looked up as the doorbell rang. He jumped to his feet, opened the door.

"Hello," said Vivian Hallsey. "I was in Orange City and thought I'd drop by to see you."

"Professionally or socially?" asked Don. "Come on in, in either case."

"It's a social visit," said Vivian Hallsey. "Of course, if you've done anything spectacular, like finding an Abominable Snowman or making contact with Lost Atlantis, I'd find it hard to restrain myself."

"We're just shifting into high gear," said Jean. "Have some coffee?"

"Thanks. Sure I'm not bothering you?"

"Of course not. We liked your story; you didn't make us out to be typical Southern California crack-pots. We're just now trying to organize a sensible program for ourselves."

"Go right ahead. I'm interested. In fact that's why I'm here."

"Well, our first problem is deciding where to begin. There's plenty of literature, thousands of case-histories, bushels of more or less valid research—but we want to start where the others leave off. In other words we're not planning to duplicate Dr. Rhine's experiments, and we don't want to make Borley Rectory-type studies. The



field is enormous—" The telephone rang, Jean answered.

"It's Dr. James Cogswell, from the American Society of Psychical Research. He wants to call on us."

"Fine. Where's he phoning from?"

"He's in Orange City." She spoke into the telephone, hung up.

"He'll be right out."

Vivian Hallsey started to rise; Jean said, "No, no, don't go. We like company."

Five minutes later Dr. James Cogswell presented himself. He was sixty years old, a brain surgeon: short, plump, with coal-black hair, combed in precise dark streaks across his balding scalp. He wore elegant clothes; his manners were highly civilized. Don thought of him as representing the old-fashioned school of psychic research, a man who might have been colleague to Sir Oliver Lodge or William McDougall. Dr. Cogswell looked about with interest and a faintly patronizing air, which at first irritated, then amused Don. It was, after all, the natural condescension of a veteran for a group of enthusiastic, and undoubtedly naive, beginners.

"I understand that you plan to conduct a large-scale attack on some of our mutual problems," said Cogswell.

"That's our purpose."

Cogswell nodded. "Excellent. It's exactly what's needed—a well-organized, well-financed—I understand that you're well-financed?" He looked searchingly at Don.

"Adequately so," said Don. "At least for all present possibilities and contingencies."

"Good. We need a central agency, a permanent full-time trained staff working at a definite

program. My own organization is loose and undisciplined; we're on our own so far as investigations are concerned. However we do have access to a large library, and perhaps I can save you some duplication of effort." He looked around the room. "Is this your headquarters?"

"Temporarily. Until we know what we need—which depends on our program."

"And what is your program, may I ask?"

"We were just hacking it out when you arrived."

"Am I interrupting you?"

"By no means. You can help us."

"Fine. Go right ahead."

"I was explaining to Miss Hallsey that we have no intent of duplicating either Rhine's work or performing any ghost-laying in the classic tradition."

"Good. I approve heartily."

"What we want to do is attack the basis, the lowest common denominator, of all parapsychological phenomena. The simplest, or most common, effect of course is telepathy. It's part of our everyday lives, although probably none of us are aware how much or how little we use it. Telepathy exists, it links minds. How? Action at a distance without a link—of some kind—is impossible."

Dr. Cogswell shrugged. "'Impossible' is a big word."

"Not too big. Don't forget, Doctor, we're operating as scientists, not mystics. Axiom One: action at a distance is unthinkable. Axiom Two: an effect has a cause." He raised his hand to quell Dr. Cogswell's objection. "I'm familiar with the Uncertainty Principle. But doesn't it describe the limits of our investigative abilities, rather than the events themselves?"

We can't determine both the position and velocity of an electron simultaneously—but this does not presuppose that the two qualities are non-existent. So far as we know there is nothing to differentiate a stable radium atom from one which is about to disintegrate. To the best of our present knowledge the process occurs at random. But obviously, if we were able to compare the two atoms carefully enough, we could decide which was about to disintegrate. The lack is in our abilities, not the radium atoms. If they were exactly alike, if they were identities, exposed to identical conditions, then they must act alike."

"I fear," said Dr. Cogswell, a trifle pompously, "that your analysis is based on human experience. You reason anthropomorphically, so to speak. Consider the increment of weight as an object approaches light-speed. Such a concept is completely beyond our experience—yet it exists."

Don laughed. "Your analogy doesn't contradict me, Doctor. Remember, I'm not postulating that all events are determined by Newtonian physics. Light-speed physics works by its own determinants, so do sub-molecular reactions, and so do parapsychological events."

"Very well," sighed Dr. Cogswell. "Continue."

"We consider the varieties of parapsychological events: telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, retrocognition, telekinesis, spirit action, poltergeists, house-haunting, sympathetic magic. With precognition and retrocognition, a sort of time-travel occurs. This aside, the phenomena all involve or occur in some sort of medium definitely beyond the sensitivity of our instruments. For the sake of

the discussion, we'll call it mind-stuff. Super-normal continuum, if you prefer."

"Mind-stuff suits me," said Dr. Cogswell.

Don nodded, leaned back in his chair. "So, it appears that our first objective is this mind-stuff, or continuum. What is it?"

Vivian Hallsey said, "Heavens, we don't even know what our own matter consists of."

Don nodded. "Right. My question was rhetorical. I should have asked, how does it work? How is it related to our own matter?"

"What if there isn't any relationship?" suggested Vivian Hallsey airily.

"There *has* to be some relationship. The two states have too many qualities in common. Time, in the first place. Second, energy. Ectoplasm reflects light, and certain ghosts give off light. Anything which radiates or reflects light must have some sort of relationship with normal matter. Third, the fact that a great deal of parapsychological phenomena is generated inside an undeniably material brain."

"Very well," said Dr. Cogswell. "So much is clear. Objective—mind-stuff. And how do you propose to proceed?"

Don smiled. "If I wanted to learn something about Timbuctoo, how would I do it?"

"Go there."

"And if I couldn't go there myself?"

"Talk to someone who's been there."

Don nodded. "Exactly. To this end I'd like to locate a dozen effective mediums of proved integrity, who don't object to scientific checks and corroboratory measures."

"Ah," said Dr. Cogswell sadly, "wouldn't we all? There may not be that many in the whole United States."

"After you get the mediums, after you contact the spirits—what do you ask them?" inquired Vivian Hallsey. "And after they tell you, how do you check?"

Don said sadly, "That's our first problem. And it's a hard one. Don't forget, we still aren't at all sure that spirits exist. There's a strong possibility that the mediums are highly, if unconsciously, telepathic. We've got to rule out that possibility first. We want to determine whether a departed spirit can give first, information unknown to any living human mind; second, information unknown to any human mind, living or dead; third, information predicting an event in the future whose existence has been determined by pure chance, or at least by no human intervention, such as the fall of a meteor, a volcanic explosion, a sunspot."

"Or two or three daily doubles at Santa Anita," said Vivian Hallsey. "That's what I need."

Dr. Cogswell ignored her, rather pointedly. "Those are the classic problems certainly," he agreed. "Personally, I know of no experiment to prove beyond dispute the existence of spirit control. There is always some combination of telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition or retrocognition to explain any apparently inexplicable knowledge."

"I'd even be satisfied to learn the mechanisms behind telepathy, as a starter," said Don.

"How about ghosts?" asked Vivian Hallsey. "If you could authenticate ghosts, you'd prove the existence of spirits."

"Not necessarily," said Cogswell.

"Ghosts are probably the imprint of emotion on the supernormal continuum—about as alive as 3D movies."

"But aren't there cases of ghosts acting with intelligence? Of responding differently to different circumstances?"

Cogswell shrugged. "Perhaps. I can't think of any authenticated cases offhand. The Clactonwall Deacon, perhaps. Or the Wailing Lady of Gray Water."

"Poltergeists," suggested Jean.

"Yes. Poltergeists, of course."

"There's one sure way to find out the truth," said Don.

"Die," said Cogswell.

"I think I'll be going," said Vivian, "before I get elected guinea-pig."

"Perhaps I should have said two ways. The second is to go there—and return."

Cogswell started to speak, then paused. Then: "You mean, counterfeited death?"

"Something of the sort. Isn't it possible to die and be revived?"

Cogswell shrugged. "There have been rather remarkable rumors out of Russia . . . And some remarkable work being done at the local universities with low temperatures. The body can't take organic damage, of course. If large ice-crystals rupture the cells—finish. Then there's the matter of keeping the brain oxygenated. Ten minutes without oxygen—a man can never get his sanity back. It's not an easy situation."

"In the case of low-temperature catalepsy, is oxygenation so important?"

"No, not nearly . . . In fact—well, I'll admit it. I'm involved in some of these experiments myself. We've frozen a dog stiff, and re-

vived him after twenty-two minutes."

Vivian laughed. "Now all you need is someone to be Bill the Lizard!"

Dr. Cogswell raised his eyebrows. "Bill the Lizard?"

"A character in 'Alice in Wonderland.' He was persuaded to perform some investigations with disastrous results."

"These experiments are only the first phase, of course," said Don. "If the other world exists, perhaps we can set up channels of communication. Possibly even material transfer."

Dr. Cogswell shook his head in respectful, if somewhat dubious, admiration. "You have remarkable ideas, Mr. Berwick."

"It's a remarkable world we live in," said Don. "Consider the sciences: astronomy, bacteriology, physics. Think how fantastic the contemporary scene would seem to the early researchers! And the old ideas of witchcraft and sorcery—how vastly more marvellous is our new knowledge! Think where it's leading us, this knowledge. Our lives change every week—never the changes we expect. This work we're dabbling in now—it's the foundation for a new body of knowledge as important as all the rest together. The men of the future—they'll use the word 'spiritualist' as we say 'alchemist,' 'astrologer.' What we'll accomplish—" he shrugged. "Who knows? Perhaps a great deal, more likely not. We'll be lucky if we stumble on a few of the right tools. Still—someone has to start. Astonishing that humanity has waited this long."

"Not astonishing, really," said Vivian. "The after-life, the hyper-normal—they're part of all the su-

perstitions, the religions, and therefore taboo."

"They still are," said Dr. Cogswell. "I care nothing for any taboos, except those of the American Medical Association. And there I've got to be careful." He rose to his feet. "Now I must go. If I can be of any help, let me know."

"You can put us in touch with a dozen effective mediums."

Cogswell shook his head doubtfully. "They're scarce as hen's teeth . . . Exactly how do you plan to proceed with a dozen mediums? What do you hope to prove?"

"Mainly, I just want to see what'll happen. We'll try simultaneous seances—the mediums separate, then the mediums together. We'll try to send messages from medium to medium through the spirit controls. We'll try for exact knowledge of the physical nature of this after-life region."

Dr. Cogswell shrugged. "It sounds interesting and very ambitious, but there are also difficulties. For instance, you'd need optimum performances from all twelve mediums at the same time—which in such an atmosphere would be extremely lucky."

"All we can do is try," said Don. "We'll never know otherwise. Maybe this shot-gun technique will open up the problem."

Cogswell rubbed his chin. "When do you propose to begin?"

"As soon as possible. We'll call it—Exercise One."

## 9. Free-for-All

THE day for Exercise One approached, arrived. At three o'clock the participants began to arrive at 26 Madrone Place, a large old house on the outskirts of Orange City, rented for the occa-

sion. First came members of the Psychical Research Society, observers from the psychology departments of local universities, Vivian Hallsey, with a somber-appearing man in a dark suit. She introduced him somewhat mysteriously to Don and Jean as Mr. Kelso. Don hesitated, then said, "Are you a journalist, Mr. Kelso?"

"Of a sort, yes."

"Our policy here is freedom of the press—in general. We see no reason why the public shouldn't be informed of any progress we make. But I do object to sensationalization, because it impedes us. It's difficult to persuade sensitive people to undertake these experiments. If they become notorious or the subject of ridicule, it's impossible."

"I quite understand," said Mr. Kelso. "However I'm here today unofficially, an observer, a friend of Miss Hallsey's."

"Then you're very welcome."

At five o'clock the mediums began to arrive, and were taken at once to separate rooms. The floors were bare; in each was a small wooden table, a couch and arm-chairs for the medium and the observers. Inconspicuous in each room was a microphone, the leads of which ran to a central bank of speakers and tape-recorders in the old living room, now known as the control room. Don had considered installing closed-circuit TV within each room, connected to a screen in the control room, but could think of no advantage to the scheme, and had abandoned it.

Of fourteen mediums approached, only eight had agreed to participate in the experiments. In general they seemed to be persons of average intelligence and education, ranging in age from Grand-

ma Hogart, sixty-two, to her grandson Myron Hogart, eighteen. Myron showed a timorous excitement; Grandma Hogart's comments were caustic and skeptical; Alec Dillon held himself aloof—a pallid thin-featured man, austere and taciturn; Ivalee Trembath maintained her crystalline serenity. They showed little interest in each other—all except Grandma Hogart, who labelled the others frauds. To prevent friction and any possible collusion, conscious or unconscious, Don arranged that each medium be kept isolated from every other.

At seven o'clock the exercise was scheduled to begin; but Alec Dillon, unmarried, middle-aged, and temperamental, developed nervous attenuation and asked for time to gain composure. The delay irritated the others; there was grumbling. The exercise threatened to collapse even before it started. Jean and Dr. Cogswell scurried from room to room, apologizing, soothing, easing the tension.

Don sat in the control room tapping his fingers nervously, watching the signal panel, where seven lights signalled "Ready." Vivian Hallsey and Kelso sat quietly to the side. There was nothing to do but wait. Don turned to Kelso. "Are you interested in this kind of thing personally or professionally?"

"Both," said Kelso. "It's frequently crossed my mind that telepathy, clairvoyance, etcetera, would confer a significant military advantage on the nation which systematized them."

Don reflected. "I suppose so. I hadn't considered that aspect of the situation. You're not a government official?"

Kelso shook his head. "I work

for *Life*. We recently ran a picture-essay on haunted houses. Did you see it?"

Don nodded. "Beautiful pictures."

Minutes passed. At seven twenty-five Alec Dillon sank with a sigh into his arm-chair, ready to summon his control; Sir Gervase Desmond. In the control room all eight lights glowed. Don hunched forward, eight intercom speakers in front of him; also eight microphones connected to speaker-buttons in the ears of the operators. By this means Don could give signals and instructions without disturbing the mediums.

Don spoke into a master microphone which took his voice to all the eight rooms. "We're all ready. Remember, there's no pressure on any of us. This is for fun. We're not trying to prove anything; we're not trying to check on anyone—so everybody relax."

From Room 2 came a resentful mutter; this would be Alec Dillon, who had a poet's aversion to exactitude and scientific method. If there were four firm contacts, thought Don, he'd consider Exercise One a success. Under conditions at 26 Madrone Place even four contacts would be remarkable. "Let's go."

He switched on the tape-recorders, leaned back in his chair, and prepared for a wait.

From Room 4, Grandma Hogart's room, came the sound of the Lord's Prayer; in Room 7 someone was humming a hymn; from other speakers came snatches of uneasy conversation, jokes, complaints.

Don waited. Jean came into the room, sat beside him.

"There won't be anything for five or ten minutes," Don told Vivian and Kelso. "They have to get

in the mood to begin with."

"Any chance of materializations, ectoplasm, things like that?" asked Kelso. I've got an *f1* Canon loaded with Tri-X that'll take stop-action of black cats fighting in a dark cellar."

Don shrugged. "Never can tell. Have it ready, if you like. None of these mediums, so far as I know, have ever materialized anything. An honest materialization is rare."

"Can a spirit materialize without the help of a medium?"

"If you wait long enough," Vivian told Kelso, "you'll have all the answers on your own."

Kelso laughed grimly, "But I won't be able to sell the pictures. I might not even be able to have them developed . . . What about it, Don? Do these spirits ever materialize on their own?"

Don grinned. "I've never been a spirit; I couldn't tell you . . . So far as I'm aware—no."

"But ghosts—they seem to come and go as they please. And poltergeists."

"Ah," said Don. "A different matter. I'm referring to the class of spirits which communicate through mediums. Ghosts and poltergeists are two other classes. Three distinct classes in all—at least three classes."

Kelso looked puzzled. "Isn't that rather confusing? How do you know there are three classes?"

"They behave differently. The spirits—I'll use the word to describe influences operating through mediums—the spirits act and think more or less as we'd expect the spirit of a human being to act. Ghosts seem to be mindless affairs, imprints of a great emotional disturbance on the parapsychological matrix, which reveal themselves under certain conditions—what

these conditions are, no one knows. Poltergeists—'noisy ghosts' to translate—are invisible and mischievous. They occur principally in houses where adolescent children live—and it's possible that they're no more than an unconscious telekinetic process of the adolescent mind. That's just a theory—no more. Poltergeists don't seem to fit anywhere else into the picture."

"Listen," said Jean. A voice came from Room 3: the clear voice of Ivalee Trembath's Molly Toogood.

"Hello."

"Hello," said the voice of the Room 3 observer, a divinity student named Tom Ward. "How are you tonight?"

"Very well. I don't think I know you."

"No, we've never met."

Jean signaled to Don; young Myron Hogart's wire, the line from Room 8 was coming alive; his control was rapping on the table. Almost at the same time a whistle came from Grandma Hogart in Room 4.

"Hello, sassy," said Grandma Hogart. "You're looking pert tonight—all cute in your little pink dress."

"Yes, ma'am," said the piping voice of a little girl. "I'm all fixed up because I'm glad to see you."

"This nice young man is Dr. Cogswell," said Grandma Hogart.

"How-de-do," said the control. "My name's Pearl; I'm a little colored girl; I was born in Memphis, Tennessee."

The other speakers all began to sound; there was suddenly too much to listen to.

Jean said, in a hushed voice of astonishment, "They've all made contact—everyone of them!"

Two or three minutes passed.

Chatter, gossip, greetings, small-talk came from the intercom speakers.

Don spoke into the subsidiary mikes, those which took his voice to the operator's ear-buttons. "Now—first question."

They listened to Room 3, as Tom Ward, the divinity student, put the first of the well-rehearsed questions to Molly.

"What does it look like where you are now?"

The various responses came in over the speakers and were recorded on the tapes.

"Second question," said Don.

In every room except No. 3 the question was asked. "*Do you know Molly Toogood? Can you see her now?*"

The answers came in slowly, dubiously, and were duly recorded.

As a second part of the same question, in all the rooms except No. 2, the observer asked, "*Do you know Sir Gervase Desmond?*"

This was Alec Dillon's control; while the responses came in from seven rooms, Sir Gervase, a Regency Buck, criticized Alec in a nasal supercilious drawl. Alec, not completely in trance, defended himself, and they quarrelled until the amused observer intervened.

Listening to the quarrel, Don thought that the two voices of Alec and Sir Gervase mingled and spoke together; the tape-recorder would corroborate his impressions. An interesting situation: two voices coming simultaneously from the same throat, the same larynx! Of course the diaphragm of any loudspeaker performed the same feat with no difficulty. But the vocal chords, the glottal passages, tongue, teeth and lips constituted a sound-producing mechanism rather more complicated than a

diaphragm . . . Don shelved the line of thought; it had become too involved, and there was too much happening. He must guard against a marveling frame of mind, he told himself. Everything that he was seeing and hearing, everything in this universe and every other, had some kind of logic—some system of laws, some cycle of cause and effect. It might be far removed from classical physics and ordinary human experience—but the laws must be there, available for human brains to codify.

In the eight rooms the talk was becoming desultory.

"Third question," said Don.

In each of the eight rooms the observer asked: "*What does our world look like to you?*" And after the answers were recorded, "*What does your medium look like?*" For the words 'your medium' the observer substituted the name of the medium.

Then the fourth question: "*Is ex-President Franklin D. Roosevelt present? Can you contact him at the present moment? What does he think of the present administration?*"

The fifth question: "*Is Adolf Hitler present? Is he happy or unhappy? Is he being punished for his crimes on Earth?*"

The sixth question: "*Have you ever seen Jesus Christ? Mohammed? Buddha? Mahatma Gandhi? Have you ever seen Joseph Stalin?*"

Then the seventh question: "*In the year 3244 B.C. an Egyptian scribe by the name of Mahnekhe died in Thebes. Is it possible to communicate with him? Is he present now?*"

The eighth question: "*Do you think of yourself as a soul? A disembodied spirit? A person?*"

The ninth question: "*How do you know when your medium is ready to make contact? Why do you respond?*"

The tenth question: "*Is there anything on Earth that you feel the need of? Can some living person bring it to you?*"

The eleventh question: "*Do you eat, sleep? What kind of food do you eat? In what kind of shelter do you sleep?*"

Twelfth question: "*Do you have a day and a night? Is it night or day now?*"

Thirteenth question: "*Does this type of questioning bother you? Are you willing to help us learn more about the after-life?*"

#### 10. Madman's Threat

AT 7:25 Exercise One began, with all eight mediums in touch with their controls. The questions were not necessarily asked or answered with consistent precision or timing. In many cases the control chattered inconsequentialities, mumbled, refused to speak, or was otherwise uncooperative; there was no means by which the operator could enforce order. At question 10 Sir Gervase Desmond, in a huff, left Alec Dillon, who fell into a deep sleep. At Question 11 Grandma Hogart's vitality waned, and her voice faded; little Pearl respectfully said farewell. After Question 10 only Ivalee Trembath, young Myron Hogart, Mrs. Kerr (a placid fat woman), and Mr. Bose (a thin Negro mail-carrier), still maintained contact with the other world. These four showed no signs of fatigue until after Question 13 and the end of Exercise One. The time was 9:45.

Grandma Hogart, Alec Dillon were asleep, to be joined at once



by Mrs. Kerr; most of the others were relaxing with tea, coffee, beer or highballs.

Don and Dr. Cogswell stepped into each room, thanked the participants; Jean paid Mrs. Kerr, Grandma Hogart and Mrs. Vascelles their professional fees. Only Myron Hogart seemed interested in the results of the exercise; to the others it had been merely another seance.

By eleven o'clock the house was clear. Don, Jean, Vivian Hallsey, Kelso, Dr. Cogswell and Godfrey Head, a professor of mathematics at UCLA gathered in the library. The mood was convivial; the mass seance had come off with a success beyond the hopes of anyone.

"Don!" cried Dr. Cogswell. "We've got to play back those tapes and do some computing."

"If you like," said Don. "We can work up Question One tonight."

The tape-recorders were arranged in a row; the response to Question 1 was played back for each room in turn, and a list made of significant elements.

**Question 1:** *What does it look like where you are now?*

1. *Kochamba*: "White plains"—"golden ramparts, the host of the Lord"—"shining in the pearly light of our Lord"—"the golden towers, the lawns and flower gardens like the most wonderful park in the world, with statues of the angels, and everywhere the great glory of Kingdom Come."—"Off in the distance there's the lower-class places, but you can't see 'em so good, and not too far away there's Hell."—"No, Hell ain't down below—at least not too far down."
2. *Sir Gervase Desmond*: "Why, naturally, it's the finest of

Room	Medium	Control	Identity	Apparent date of birth
1	Kenward Bose	Kochamba	Senegal Chieftain brought to New Orleans as slave	1830
2	Alec Dillon	Sir Gervase Desmond	English Nobleman	1790
3	Ivalee Trembath	Molly Toogood	Early California settler	1845
4	Grandma Hogart	Pearl	Little Negro girl	1925
5	Mrs. Kerr	Marie Kozard	Parisian demi-mondaine	1900
6	Mrs. Vascelles	Lula	?	?
7	Joanne Howe	Dr. Gordon Hazelwood	Massachusetts physician	1900
8	Myron Hogart	Lew Wetzel	Fictional character (?)	?

- places; would I be here otherwise? Everyone wears elegant clothes; the gentlemen and their ladies, I mean. It's like a great race meeting. No horses of course, and nobody runs a book, more's the pity. But lovely, lovely, and all melting away into gold, and all the silver and pearly water; jewels for the taking, by Jove! Far too good for you, Dillon."
3. *Molly Toogood*: "Seems like it's all they're interested in nowadays. I told 'em once, but I'll tell 'em again: it's like your Earth, only much prettier. Of course we can see the old land anytime we want to look."
4. *Pearl*: "Now, Grandma, I don't know as I can describe something like this, because it's too superior and wonderful for words. But we're all up here, all waiting for you; all the great men and women, all doing what they like to do. It's really pretty, all gold and green and off in the distance there's the great Light of God, and his wonderful city."
5. *Marie Kozard*: (no reply)
6. *Lula*: "Lovely, dear—I know you'd enjoy it. There's all the people, all walking around in balls of light, and the greater the man or woman, the brighter the light. And the gorgeous palaces, and sunrises and sunsets, like great peacock tails everywhere around the sky." (In response to question: what costume do the great men wear?) "Just the clothes they always wore. There's Napoleon in his cocked hat and white breeches, and there's George Washington—he's got powdered hair; he looks just like the pictures."
7. *Dr. Gordon Hazelwood*: (no comprehensible reply)
8. *Lew Wetzel*: "It's hard to say, because it's hazy-like. Everywhere you look, all the palaces and big buildings—they melt off into the haze. When I first came here it was all different—there wasn't any of these big skyscrapers; it was more Frenchy-like. Now there's all these big steel and glass things and streamline things."

The first question was tabulated; the time was two o'clock. Don sighed, opened a can of beer. "Let's see. What do we have?"

Godfrey Head looked down the list. "The consensus seems to be that the after-world is a bright, beautiful land full of palaces and golden castles, with people walking around in fancy clothes."

"There's quite some talk of haze," said Dr. Cogswell. "Horizons melting away—and here: Lula says the skies are like peacock tails."

"Why can't spirits take photographs?" asked Kelso, in deep pain. "Think of it: big picture-essay on the after-life. Think we'd sell that issue?"

"Another thing about Lula," said Don. "Notice how the people 'walk around in balls of light,' but the great men are the brightest."

"Great men seem very much in evidence," mused Jean. "Still, it's really rather queer the different ways they see the after-life. There they are, all together in the same place—at least, so we assume—and each gives us a description similar, but just a trifle different, from the others."

"Well," said Godfrey Head, "we don't want to take everything literally; we've got to make allowances, to consider the subconscious coloring of the medium, reconcile

the various points of view, take the lowest common denominator, so to speak."

Don drummed his fingers on his beer-can. "I'm not sure that I agree—completely. I don't think it's good practice to select only the consistent statements. If we ignore whatever seems unreasonable, we're not learning anything, we're merely building our own picture of the hereafter—not the one which these controls have given us."

"What about Wetzel's 'skyscrapers'—'streamlined shapes'? Incidentally, who was Lew Wetzel? The name's familiar."

"A character in a novel. 'The Deerslayer,' by James Fennimore Cooper, I believe."

Head leaned back in his seat. "Now this really demands consideration. How can a character in a novel have a spirit? . . . It hardly seems credible!" He looked at Dr. Cogswell. "Are you convinced of the lad's responsibility?"

"Perfectly."

"Perhaps under the strain—the feeling of competition . . ."

"No," said Dr. Cogswell. "I've heard Wetzel talk half a dozen times."

"He's really the character from the novel?"

"That's right. I asked him about it. He says whatever or whoever he is he's there, and he can't account for himself any other way."

"Of course," said Jean, "his character might have been taken from life."

"Yes, that's possible. In fact, highly probable."

"But what about these chromium skyscrapers?" cried Head. "Certainly we've got to exercise some selection!"

"We've got to be very careful," Don insisted. "We simply can't

throw out items because they're inconsistent, or don't agree with *a priori* theories."

"But these people can't all be right!" protested Head. "We've got to decide on a reasonable compromise—that's our function, after all!"

"They might be speaking from different parts of this after-world. To me Wetzel's comment about the skyscrapers is highly significant. It might mean that the after-world changes as our own world changes."

"Or reflects this one," said Jean.

"Or that the after-world and the control is nothing but the medium's subconscious fabrication," grumbled Head.

Don nodded. "That's certainly our big headache. The next question was designed to shed a little light."

Jean read the question: "'Do you know Molly Toogood? Do you know Sir Gervase Desmond?'"

"We'd still face uncertainties," Don observed, "even if the answers were all 'yes,' even if Molly and Sir Gervase were described with great consistency—because we might hypothesize telepathic communication between the mediums."

"Certainly not an unreasonable explanation," said Godfrey Head.

"As I recall," said Don, "the question gave us very little information; no one seems definitely to know anyone else." He looked at his watch. "It's late . . . Shall we call it a night?"

Head and Cogswell rose to their feet. "Incidentally," said Head, "have any of you been to hear the Fighting Preacher at the Orange City Auditorium?"

"Not I," said Cogswell. "What about him?"

"Dill, from our Political Science department, took me to hear him. Dill is alarmed. He says this Hugh Bronny is an alarming phenomenon, a nascent Hitler. He's got a force, a gift of gab, no question about it. But I only mention him because he's attacking 'devil-inspired scientists who're fooling around with God's business!' He says that they're trying to produce life in test-tubes and also trying to sneak sinners into Heaven. He says places like the Parapsychological Foundation ought to be stopped—by force, if necessary. He really means business."

Jean sat rather limp. "He mentioned us—by name?"

"Oh, yes. In fact, he singled out the Parapsychological Foundation."

"Anything to constitute slander?" asked Don lightly.

"He called you a Godless scientist, in league with the Devil. If you can show that he acted in malice and that your reputation is injured—you can sue."

"First," said Don ruefully, "I'd probably have to prove I *wasn't* in league with the Devil."

"Maybe we can take our stable of mediums to court," suggested Dr. Cogswell, "and materialize the Devil for a witness."

"There'd be difficulties swearing him in," Don remarked.

"That does it," said Head. "Good night all."

Kelso, Vivian Hallsey, and Dr. Cogswell took their leave immediately after.

Don turned to Jean, took her hands. "Tired?"

"Yes. But not so tired that—" she stopped short, staring across his shoulder. Don turned. "What's the trouble?"

"There's someone outside—at the window."

Don ran to the door, opened it, went out on the porch. Jean came out behind him.

Don asked, "Did you see his face?"

"Yes . . . I thought it was—" she could not speak the name.

"Hugh?"

She pressed against his arm. "I'm afraid of him, Donald . . ."

Don raised his voice a little. "Hugh! Why don't you come out, Hugh? Wherever you're hiding . . ."

A tall shape materialized. Hugh stepped out onto the gravel path. The street-light shone yellow in his great angular face; shadows filled his eye-sockets and the pockets under his cheekbones.

Jean said in a sharp voice, "Why don't you press the doorbell, Hugh? Why do you look through the window?"

"You know why," said Hugh. "I came to see with my own eyes what goes on at this house."

"See anything worthwhile?" Don asked.

"I saw evil men and women leaving this place."

Don said in a voice that was light and dry and edged, like sandpaper, "I hear you've been including us in your invective."

"I've been preaching the Holy Lord God's word as I understand it."

Don studied him a moment, his mouth set in a disdainful smile. "You may be a power-mad hypocrite, Hugh—or you may just be a plain fool. One thing you're certainly not—that's a Christian!"

Hugh stared back, his eyes like kettles of hot blue glass. He said in a heavy voice, "I'm a Christian minister. I walk four-square down

the Holy Path. And no sneering atheist like yourself can turn me aside."

Don shrugged, turned to go inside.

"Wait!" commanded Hugh hoarsely.

"What for?"

"You spoke ill of me just now. You reviled me. You denied my Christianity—"

"Christ taught kindness, the brotherhood of man. You're no Christian. You're a demagogue. A rabble-rouser. A hate merchant."

Now Hugh grinned, a painful uncomfortable grimace that showed long yellow teeth. "You'll be sorry," he said simply. Then he turned on his heel, his feet crunched down the gravel path.

Don looked back at Jean. "Let's go home."

## 11. Aura of Death

INSTEAD of driving home Don and Jean drove out on the desert, passing Indian Hill. Jean looked up toward the invisible hulk of the Freelock house. Don slowed the car. "Want to go up and hunt ghosts?" he asked, wanly facetious.

"No thanks," said Jean decidedly.

"Scared?"

"No, not any more. I'm not afraid of the ghosts: it's the atmosphere which hangs around the house . . ." She hugged his arm. "I can't feel unkindly about the place—because that's where I decided to marry you."

Don laughed mournfully. "You probably thought you were picking a nice normal junior executive."

"No," said Jean. "I knew you were nice and—well, sufficiently

normal—but I knew you'd never be the sort of man to plump for security and routine."

"Didn't you give up hope when the exaggerated report of my death came through from Korea?"

"In a way . . . But somehow I couldn't believe it. I had a feeling you'd turn up."

"Like a bad penny . . . That was a tough three years. I think I was half out of my mind the whole time . . . Mmf!"

"What's the trouble?"

"I've forgotten all the Russian and Chinese I learned so diligently. I doubt if I could ask for a drink of water now . . ."

They turned off on a side-road, drove two miles into the dark desert, parked, got out of the car.

The night was clear and quiet; constellations rode across the sky, the air smelled fresh of sage and creosote bush.

"We should be in bed," said Don.

"I know." Jean leaned back against him. "But I wouldn't be able to sleep . . . Not after tonight." She looked up into the sky. "Look, Don: all the stars, and the galaxies beyond—and beyond and beyond. Could the after-life world be as enormous as ours?"

Don shook his head. "We'll have to ask the question at another mass seance."

"And where is it, Don? In our minds? All around us? Off in another dimension?"

"All we can do is guess. I don't believe it's inside our minds, or in another set of dimensions. At least no set of dimensions with any formal or mathematical relationship to our own."

"If it exists—it exists somewhere!—to quote that eminent student of the occult, Professor Donald Berwick." Smiling, she

looked up over her shoulder into his face.

"Right! Where that somewhere is, is the problem. Perhaps we'll have to go there to find out."

She turned around, faced him. "Now look here, Mr. Berwick—I don't want you toying with such ideas . . . Such as dying in order to make a personal investigation."

Don laughed. "No. I don't want to die for a while." He kissed her. "It's too much fun being alive . . . But maybe it might be possible to tiptoe along the borderline—during a period of extreme, stupor, or unconsciousness. Even sleep."

"Donald!" exclaimed Jean. "Sleep! Dreams! Do you think—?"

Don laughed. "It *would* be amusing, wouldn't it? If every night everybody made little excursions into the after-world? . . . It's not impossible, not unthinkable. Our dream-world certainly is a world of the mind. It's palpable, sensible—we feel, hear, see, taste. But dream-worlds—" he thought, laughed, "I was about to point out that dream-worlds are a function of individual experience, and couldn't possibly be the after-life . . . Then I remembered the results of Question One."

Jean took his shoulders in her hands, shook him. "If the after-world is the dream-world, I don't want you going. Because some terrible things happen."

"Sure! But we always wake up safe and sound, don't we? But I'm not convinced of this dream-world—after-world equation. The dream-world shifts so rapidly."

"How do we know that the after-world doesn't behave the same way?"

"We have the answers to Question One. And other reports, in the books of Eddy, Stewart Edward

White, Frank Mason. They—or I should say, the spirits they contacted—describe the after-world as Utopia—more beautiful, more glorious, more happy than our own."

Jean nodded. "That accords, more or less, with what we heard tonight."

"More or less. There are differences. Peculiar differences." He took Jean's hand, they walked slowly along the pale ribbon of road. "These men are honest and intelligent, and they've tried to be objective. Stewart Edward White's Betty, Mason's Dr. MacDonald, Eddy's—I've forgotten his name—Reverend something-or-other; they give pictures of the after-world which are similar but not exact. Their hows and whys differ considerably."

"I suppose we have to make allowances for the medium, the control and even the predisposition of the author."

Don agreed. "Another point: consider the curious way in which the after-life seems to keep pace with contemporary sciences; never ahead, sometimes behind. For instance, Dr. MacDonald, a spirit, is asked to treat the medium Bib Tucker. He prescribes herbs which are unknown at the time, but used sixty years before. Still, in 1920 when Mason asks him about the nature of electricity, Dr. MacDonald gives a contemporary answer—describes it as a phase of atomic energy. It's inconsistent and unconvincing—if we assume Dr. MacDonald to be a true spirit."

They stopped. Don picked up a stone, tossed it out into the dark. "If we think of Dr. MacDonald as a function of the author Mr. Mason, the medium Bib Tucker, and the other members of the particu-

lar group—he becomes more credible.”

“You mean that this Dr. MacDonald is an illusion—that Molly Toogood and all the others are illusions?”

“No. I think that they’re real enough. Actually, I’m only speculating. But perhaps they’ve been created, brought into being . . . This may be the way ghosts, apparitions, spooks in general appear. Enough people believe in them—and suddenly they’re real.”

Jean maintained a dubious silence. Don slipped his arm around her waist. “Don’t like it, eh?” They started back toward the car.

“No,” said Jean. “There’s so much that your theory doesn’t explain. The acts of free-will—like my father coming to us, telling us to continue drilling.”

Don nodded. “True. But on the other hand, consider young Myron Hogart’s control, Lew Wetzel. So far as we know, he never existed outside of a novel. Think of ghosts—the grotesque ones: the chain-rattlers, the women in shrouds, the luminous monks, carrying their heads in their arms. Isn’t it reasonable to suppose that these are the concreted product of minds? It may be possible.”

“Whatever they are,” said Jean, “I don’t really want to see any . . . I must admit, that in spite of my brave words, two-thirds of the time I’m scared as blazes . . . I suppose we should be starting back.”

“Cold?”

“A little . . . It’s not the air . . . Sometimes the work we’re doing frightens me. It’s so remote from normal life. And death has such a close connection with it. I don’t like death, Don.”

Don kissed her. “I don’t either . . . Let’s go home.”

## 12. Computing the Results

DON, Jean, Dr. Cogswell, Kelso, Godfrey Head and Howard Rakowsky, met at 26 Madrone Place at eight o’clock the next evening. Cogswell introduced Rakowsky, a short dark man of forty-five, resilient and active as a ping-pong ball, as a fellow member of the Society for Psychic Research from San Francisco. Don inquired as to Rakowsky’s personal theories regarding spiritualistic phenomena, as he did of most people interested in the subject.

Rakowsky shrugged. “I’ve seen so much I’m confused. Ninety-five percent is fake or mistake. But that hard five percent—” he shook his head. “I suppose I take it at its face value: communication from the souls of the dead.”

Don nodded. “I’m a hard-headed Scot. I was skeptical until I had an experience that practically rattled my teeth. Our teeth, I should say. Jean and I saw a beautiful fiery ghost one night. I was startled enough to do some reading. I found lots of honest accounts—but none of them conducted under what a scientist would call test conditions. Our Exercise One the other night, so far as I know, is the first of its kind.”

“You were confounded lucky,” said Rakowsky. “Good mediums are gold.”

“Not to mention cooperative controls,” said Cogswell.

“We did pretty well,” said Don, “even though we still proved nothing, in a rigorous sense.”

Kelso blinked. “Surely you’ve proved some sort of post-death existence!”

“I’m afraid not,” said Don. “In fact I’d like to discourage that particular emphasis. The average

dabbler in parapsychology, when he strikes a bit of evidence, thinks he's proved that death isn't final; that he's demonstrated life beyond the grave. Being human, he's overjoyed. He doesn't worry about verification, or if he does, he interprets it to corroborate what he wants to believe."

Rakowsky had raised his black eyebrows. "You sound as if you yourself have doubts."

"I don't think it's proved," said Don. "Not until there are no more alternative, equally consistent, theories."

"I've heard lots of 'em," said Rakowsky. "By and large it's simpler to postulate an after-life. Especially," he glanced impishly around the room, "since that's what we all want to believe. Including Mr. Berwick."

Don nodded. "Including me." He turned to the eight tape-recorders. "I'll give you another theory as soon as we finish tonight's work." He looked at his list. "Question Three: 'What does our world look like?'"

Berwick turned on recorder No. 1. The voice of the observer asked the question; the rich heavy voice of Kochamba responded, as different from Henry Bose's dry husky tones as honey from vinegar. "We have left your world behind," said Kochamba. "We rejoice up here at the feet of the disciples." He said no more.

"Now," said Don, "Sir Gervase Desmond, on No. 2."

"Your world?" drawled Sir Gervase in contempt and astonishment. "Well, I must say I haven't turned back a second glance. I assume it's still there—but I assure you, old fellow, I haven't a farthing's worth of interest. 'What do you look like?' There you have me.

I've never thought to notice . . . Ugly chap, now that I look. Face like a sick lizard."

Molly, speaking through Ivalee Trembath, was kindlier. "Why, just as it's always looked. And Ivalee herself—why, I hear her pretty voice; it comes to me along the vibrations, as they say, and the first thing I know I'm talking with strangers."

Such was the pattern for Question 3.

Don read Question 4: "Is ex-President Franklin D. Roosevelt there? Can you see him, feel him? What does he think of the present administration?" He looked around the faces. "The reason for this question is obvious. We want to find if a number of the controls can contact the same man simultaneously—and if they can, if they bring back identical messages from him."

"Still proves nothing, one way or the other," Godfrey Head pointed out. "Nothing is proved until we can rule out telepathy. Which is hard to do, if not impossible."

Cogswell laughed. "If we ever turn up evidence that satisfies you—then we'll know we're on solid ground."

Head said doggedly, "We can't pretend to be scientists if we lapse into mysticism."

"I quite agree," said Cogswell ponderously.

"No argument on that point," said Don. "Well—let's listen to the answer . . ."

He played the tapes. The responses were confused. Sir Gervase Desmond damned Alec Dillon's eyes for his insolence; other controls mumbled and muttered; Ivalee Trembath's equable Molly said that she saw him once in awhile, off in the distance, wearing a black



cloak, usually sitting at a desk or in a chair.

"Is he still crippled?" the observer asked.

"He's a great man," said Molly. "Full of power."

None of the controls reported Roosevelt's opinion of the current administration, nor showed any willingness to inquire.

The remainder of the tapes were played back, the data organized. Somewhere after midnight the job was finished. The table was littered with beer-cans, ash-trays were full.

Don wearily took up the compilation, leaned back in his chair. "In outline here's what we've got. 'Is Hitler in the after-world?' Yes. According to two reports he appears as a shape of great solidity. Apparently he's being punished. Kochamba says he's in good old-fashioned Hell. Wetzel says he wanders the outer regions like a lost soul."

"Contradiction," muttered Head.

"Unless part of the time he's in Hell, and part of the time he wanders," Rakowsky pointed out. "Not impossible."

Don continued. "Question Six: religious leaders. Jesus is seen sometimes as a light of great radiance, sometimes as a man of great stature. He's wise, kindly, a great teacher. Mohammed, Buddha are also there, and seen in much the same manner. Gandhi the same. Now for Stalin the arch-atheist. There's two versions of Stalin apparently. One benign—the other evil. The benign shape, according to that little fragmentary sentence of Pearl's, is fading, dwindling; the evil shape is growing more solid. He seems to be enduring punishment, like Hitler." Don looked around the room. "I consider this significant. In fact,

with the answers to the next question, it corroborates a suspicion that's been growing on me . . ."

Rakowsky, Cogswell, Head and Kelso looked speculatively at him; Jean smiled faintly into her beer.

"Suspicion?"

"I have a theory regarding the after-life which I'll presently expound."

"Theories are cheap," said Rakowsky.

"There may be a critical experiment to test this one. Well—let's go on. The Egyptian scribe. No one knows him. No one can produce him—if we discount Lula's vague and rather facetious remarks.

"Eighth question. It arouses amusement in those who gave an answer. 'Of course we're persons! Just like you!'

"Ninth question: 'How do you know when the medium is trying to make contact?' It's just like someone calling their name, so say Dr. Gordon Hazelwood, Molly and Pearl. Sir Gervase just knows."

"Superior son-of-a-gun."

"Tenth question—they need nothing, want nothing." Don was scanning the compilation rapidly.

"Eleven. Now they're starting to fold up. We rely on Molly and Wetzel mostly. They say that they rest, sleep; that they have houses. Molly lives in an old ranchhouse, Wetzel lives in a cabin; sometimes he camps in the wilderness. It seems that they live much as they lived in life on Earth. Eating isn't important—not a routine affair—but they seem to eat on occasion. Bodily processes they aren't clear on . . . Pearl giggles. Molly is shocked and offended.

"Twelve. No agreement. Apparently there's both darkness and light. Molly says it's always day. Wetzel says there's day and night.

Marie Kozard says the time's always more or less evening.

"Thirteen: 'Does investigation annoy you? Is it wrong for you to answer our questions? Do you want to help us learn more about the after-life?' No clear response. Molly says it's okay; she'll help. Wetzel doesn't want to be bothered; Kochamba thinks it's bad."

"Too bad Joanne Howe isn't a better medium," Cogswell grumbled. "We could learn a lot from Hazelwood. He's the most intelligent one of the lot."

Don threw the compilations down on the table. "That's it."

"By and large," said Cogswell heavily, "an impressive mass of evidence. We've had excellent luck."

Rakowsky grunted. "It tells us nothing new . . . There's neither striking divergence or striking agreement."

"Well," said Don, "I'm newer to this game than any of you—maybe a disadvantage, maybe not. It seems to me that we turned up all kinds of significant material—assuming, of course, that our mediums are honest."

Cogswell eyed him patiently, Head shrugged. Rakowsky said, "What's this theory you were talking about?"

Don settled himself in his chair, looked from face to face. "You've all read Jung, naturally?"

"Naturally," said Dr. Cogswell.

"You're all acquainted with the idea of the collective unconscious."

"Yes."

"Jung uses the term to describe the reservoir of human symbols and ideas. I want to expand this phrase to take in all of human thought, memories, ideals, and emotions."

"That's your privilege," said

Rakowsky. "It's your theory."

"I suggest this," said Don, "that the so-called after-life is identical to the collective unconscious of the human race."

### 13. Theory of the Supernatural

THE faces wore different expressions. Godfrey Head pulled his chin thoughtfully; Rakowsky blinked half-angrily; Cogswell's heavy mouth was twisted into a skeptical S; Kelso appeared saturnine and disappointed.

"In that case, you definitely presume the absence of an independent after-life!" said Rakowsky.

Don grinned. "I knew I wouldn't get any applause."

Cogswell said sourly, "Your 'theory' is on its face illogical."

Don's grin became a little pained. "This 'theory' explains spiritualistic phenomena without recourse to personal immortality. Does that make it illogical? Are we trying to delude ourselves? Or are we trying to get at the truth, no matter how cheerless it may turn out to be?"

"We want the truth, of course," said Rakowsky. "But so far—"

Cogswell interrupted. "I maintain that the simplest explanation is the best—the usually accepted theory—"

Head said impatiently, "Let's hear Mr. Berwick out."

They all looked at Don, faintly hostile.

Don laughed. "Any theory that doesn't go to prove after-life runs into trouble. Let's be frank with ourselves. Most of us can't swallow religious dogma—but we still want to believe in after-life. That's why we're mixed up in this kind of research. We're trying to prove something to ourselves—not disprove it.

It's pretty hard to be dispassionate. But if we're not—if we don't lean over backwards, we're not scientists. We're mystics."

"Go ahead" growled Rakowsky. "Let's hear some details to this theory of yours."

"Hypothesis is probably a safer word. It makes a minimum number of assumptions, and it applies to supernatural phenomena the same rationale that we apply to the traditional sciences. We need no occult propositions about 'the purpose of life,' 'the pre-determined direction of evolution,' 'the Ultimate Unknowables.' We can approach the problem with dignity, as self-determined men trying to systematize a mass of data, rather than humble seekers after an off-hand revelation or 'divulgences.'"

"A fine speech," grumbled Cogswell. "Go on."

"Just one minute," interposed Godfrey Head. "I want to say that I heartily agree with Mr. Berwick in one respect. I've read some of the psychic research literature and a lot of it rather turned my stomach. Other-world beings are always making statements like 'this much I have been instructed to tell you—,' 'you are not ready to learn more—,' 'you are hardly at the threshold of knowledge.' I've always wondered, if they had any knowledge to impart, why they didn't impart it."

"Betty White described what she called 'the unobstructed universe,' said Rakowsky.

Head nodded. "So she did—with ostentatiously difficult terminology and ideas which she assured Mr. White were very very difficult—and which Mr. White dutifully found difficult. They're really not so difficult. When Mr. White asks after matters which Betty thinks

he's not entitled to ask about, he's reprimanded and told to keep to the subject . . . Excuse me for side-tracking. But it's a characteristic of spiritualistic writing which has always exasperated me."

Don laughed. "Me too. Well, to proceed. What does the collective unconscious contain? First, the actual contemporary scene: our cities, roads, automobiles, airplanes, the current celebrities. Second, imaginary places or localities distant in time and place which we're all more or less acquainted with: Heaven, Hell, Fairyland, The Land of Oz, the Greece and Rome of antiquity, Tahiti, Paris, Moscow, the North Pole. Third, famous men, or rather, stereotypes of famous men: George Washington as painted by Gilbert Stuart; Abraham Lincoln as on the dollar bill—or is it the five-dollar-bill? Fourth, the concepts, conventions, symbols of the racial unconscious—as distinct from the collective unconscious. The American unconscious is naturally a part of the greater unconscious of the race. In turn it's built up of smaller blocks. The California unconscious is different from the Nevada unconscious. The San Francisco unconscious is different from the Los Angeles unconscious. The unconscious of the six of us is different from that of six people next door. So—we have this fabric. From a distance it appears uniform—the collective unconscious of Genus Homo. As we approach, it becomes variegated, till at its limit we find the unconscious mind of a single man. When a single man becomes aware of a person, the person takes his place as an image in the man's unconscious. The greater the number of men that know this person, the stronger

their feelings toward him, the more intense becomes the image.

"Imaginary ideas become a part of the collective unconscious—such as ghosts, fairies. The images intensify with belief, until finally, under certain conditions, even people who don't believe can see these imaginary concepts.

"When a person dies, he figures strongly in the minds of the people who have loved him. By virtue of their devotion and faith the unconscious image gathers strength; he materializes, sends messages, and so forth. But we've got to remember that the spirit image is only a function of the living minds who knew the dead person. It talks and acts as the persons still alive think it should talk."

"But look here," cried Cogswell, "there are a dozen authenticated cases of spirits giving information outside the knowledge of any living person!"

Don nodded. "I'm hypothesizing that the spirits—call them spirits for lack of a better name—that they act by the personalities the living persons endow them with. Let's assume that John Smith is bad, in a hundred detestable secret ways. No one knows this. To his family and friends he poses as a man of benevolence and generosity. He dies; he's mourned by all. Statues are erected to him; his spirit sends back messages. But do these manifestations show John Smith's covert badness? No—they only corroborate John Smith's overt goodness."

Cogswell shuddered. "You picture a situation as detestable and incredible as the character of John Smith."

Godfrey Head said with a grin, "Dr. Cogswell is equating 'detestable' and 'incredible.'"

Cogswell started to sputter; Don held up his hand for peace. "We've got to be sure in our own minds why we're engaged in psychic research. If it's only to reinforce our hopes we'd better get out, go join a church. If we're after the truth—"

Cogswell was angry, his round face was red. "Your theory is interesting, Berwick—but it's too pat. It's unconvincing."

Rakowsky laughed. "Take it easy, Doctor. Berwick's idea isn't unconvincing—what he says makes sense—but it just isn't in line with facts."

"'Facts?'" asked Don. "What facts?"

Cogswell pulled at his lips. "Betty White has given us a very circumstantial picture of the after-life. The details she presented are—incontrovertible."

"Well," said Don, "I don't want to argue the matter exhaustively . . . However, one point in regard to the 'Unobstructed Universe'—Betty White's spirit spoke to White; but she spoke as the idealized version of Betty White. She described the collective unconscious only as White and his friend Darby conceived it."

"I must concede," said Rakowsky, "that there are other equally circumstantial accounts of the after-life—and that Berwick's theory has ingenious elements to it . . . But like all the other theories—it gives no foothold for verification."

"I'm not so sure." Don rose to his feet. "Suppose a person wanted to explore this collective unconscious, this after-life; how would he go about it?"

"The classic response is: die," said Rakowsky.

"After he's dead—then what?"

"Then he's there."

"True. But exactly as the people still alive remember him. He suffers whatever weakness and hardships they endow him with."

"I see what you're getting at," said Head. "For a spirit—call it a spirit—to function at the optimum in this presumable after-life, he has to be remembered as a person with optimum qualities."

"Right! Strong, intelligent, resourceful!"

Jean grinned. "He's got to be curious—so that he'll want to investigate. Also he must be endowed with the will to communicate back."

Dr. Cogswell struck his fist into his palm. "What about Houdini? He had all these qualities. He was well-known. But he never showed himself."

"It's a good point," said Don. "But I think it can be circumvented. How was Houdini known? What was his reputation?"

"He was known as an intelligent resourceful man, certainly."

"Yes," said Don. "But he was known as a profound skeptic—a man who claimed that spiritualism was 100 percent falsity."

"Well, yes."

"A few men and women expected to hear from him. The great mass of the public were beset by Houdini's own skepticism. Houdini to this day roams the after-life as the eternal embodiment of skepticism, believing nothing, not even in his own existence."

Cogswell gave Don a look of grudging admiration. "You talked yourself out of that one."

Don said, "I'm not just giving glib answers, I'm trying to show that my theory can meet objections."

"It hasn't met all of them. Just

what, concisely, do you plan to do?"

"I want to explore the after-life. That means, I want to explore the collective unconscious. No doubt dangers exist: bogey-men, dragons, demons, television horrors, all the stereotypes of terror. They may even be dangerous; I don't want to go as a weakling."

"Don!" said Jean softly.

"'Go'? What do you mean 'go'?" asked Rakowsky. "In the classic sense?"

"Good heavens no!" said Don. "I'm not planning to kill myself. I'm talking about heavy unconsciousness, drugged or otherwise. Of course there are methods to kill a body—to make it legally, finally dead—and then revive it. Dr. Cogswell knows more about the subject than I do."

Dr. Cogswell spoke with care. "These processes exist—but they're purely experimental. We've only killed and revived dogs so far; no human volunteers have been available."

Don said, "Naturally we'll try the least drastic methods first... Incidentally, would anyone else care to make the journey? I'm only putting myself forward from a sense of responsibility."

"The honor's all yours," said Godfrey Head. "At least, so far as I'm concerned."

"What's the best way for attaining a deep stupor, the metabolism just barely ticking, the brain inert?" Don asked Dr. Cogswell.

"There's a new anaesthetic—Calabrisol—which meets your requirements."

"Do you have any objection to using it?"

"No. None whatever. When do you wish to—go? Is 'go' the right word?"

"It serves the purpose. Do you

think we could be ready as soon as next Saturday?"

"I'll be in surgery Saturday," said Dr. Cogswell. "It would have to be Sunday."

"All right, Sunday, then."

Kelso broke in. "I don't understand this. When you awake from the anaesthetic, do you expect to remember your experiences?"

"No," said Don. "Whatever is discovered must be reported through the controls of three or four of our most dependable mediums—Ivalee, Myron Hogart, Mr. Rose, Mrs. Kerr. If I am able to leave my corporeal body and wander around the after-world, perhaps Kochamba or Molly Toogood or Lew Wetzel will notice. I hope so anyway."

"It sounds interesting," said Kelso. "I suppose there's no way you could take a camera along?" he added hopefully.

"You think of a way. I'll take it."

Kelso shook his head helplessly. Dr. Cogswell said, "We'll have to make certain preparations . . . The hospital would be most convenient. But there I'd fear for my professional reputation . . ."

"Eventually the Foundation will own the proper equipment," said Don. "But in the meantime if we can perform the experiment here, so much the better."

"It'll cost money," said Dr. Cogswell.

"No trouble there," said Don. "Whatever it costs, we're good for it."

#### 14. The Collective Unconscious

AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK Sunday morning all was in readiness. In three of the upstairs bedrooms Ivalee Trembath, Myron Hogart

and Mrs. Kerr sat relaxed, eyes closed, trying to make contact with their controls. With them were Godfrey Head, Rakowsky and Tom Ward. On a couch in the living room Don Berwick lay, with Jean sitting close beside him. Contacts were fixed to his chest, wrists and neck; his respiration, heart action and blood pressure were registered on nearby dials. Dr. Cogswell had arranged his equipment around the room: various drugs, hypodermics, an oxygen mask, oxygen tank and the flask of anaesthetic. He had hired a professional anaesthetist for the occasion, a mystified young woman who was unable to understand why a healthy man wanted to be rendered unconscious on a fine summer morning.

"Ready?"

"Ready."

Vivian Hallsey, at the control table, flashed signals to the upstairs rooms. Dr. Cogswell administered the hypodermic; the anaesthetist applied the mask.

In five minutes Don lay inert. Dr. Cogswell sat beside him, watching the dials which registered his vital processes. Respiration was shallow and slow; pulse and blood pressure were low.

Vivian Hallsey grimaced toward Jean, motioned above-stairs, shook her head. Ivalee Trembath had failed to contact the dependable Molly Toogood; Mrs. Kerr's Marie Kozard was off somewhere on business of her own. Only Myron Hogart had entered a trance. He lay almost as quiet as Don, lips twitching, fingers jerking.

Godfrey Head spoke quietly, gently. "Is Lew Wetzel there, Myron? Can we talk to Lew Wetzel?"

From Myron Hogart's lips came a cackle of harsh gibberish. Then a deep easy voice laughed. "Hear

that? That was an Injun talking."

"Hello, Lew."

"Hello, mister. You understand that Injun talk?"

"No, I'm afraid not, Lew. How's everything up above?"

"'Bout as always. Nice day today."

"Do you see my friend Don Berwick there?"

"Don Berwick. Scout, is he? Or trapper?"

"He's from my own time. He's a scientist trying to learn things."

"Don't see him around."

"I guess he hasn't passed over to you yet. He's unconscious now, and will be up there temporarily. Look for him."

"Can't be bothered with them off-again gone agains. Why don't he handle himself more carefully?"

"He wants to see you. He wants to shake hands."

"He's welcome, he's welcome."

"Look around for him, will you, Lew?"

"Can't worry too much about him, mister," said Lew fretfully. "If he hasn't passed over, he'll be hard to find. It sucks all a man's vitality out of him living down there with you folks . . . Yeah, there's someone here. He's pale and wan—too weak to talk."

"Ask him what his name is."

"He says his name is Donald Berman."

"Donald Berman, eh? Sure that's right?"

"Course I'm sure, you scalawag."

"It wouldn't be Donald Berwick, would it?"

"I've heard enough of you, mister, and your doubtin' ways. I ain't talkin' no more to you."

Godfrey Head pleaded and cajoled, but Lew Wetzel remained obstinately silent. Myron Hogart twitched, whimpered, gave a jerk,

opened his eyes. "Did you talk to Lew?"

Godfrey nodded. "He came; we talked a bit."

"Learn what you wanted?"

"He was a little touchy today."

Myron sighed. "He gets that way sometimes."

In the other rooms Ivalee Trembath and Mrs. Kerr still sat. Mrs. Kerr sang hymns, but Ivalee was quiet. Their controls refused to appear.

Two hours later Don returned to consciousness, assisted by a few whiffs of oxygen. He lay looking up at the ceiling, deep in thought, then turned his head, searched the faces standing over him.

"Do you remember anything?" asked Jean.

Don frowned. "It's like coming out of a dream. There were shapes, lights. There was a face: a man with pale blue eyes. He seemed to tower over me, as if I were a child. He wore fringed buckskin . . . Lew Wetzel?"

Jean nodded. "He's the only one who came through."

"What did he say?"

"You tell us what you saw first."

"That's all. Except I seemed to fly . . . It's completely vague. Like last week's dream."

## 15. Charon's Ferry

"WELL, we can't expect dramatic successes every time," said Don. "Today was just a teaser . . . Confound that Lew Wetzel! Donald Berman!"

The group sat at the back of the old Marsile house in Orange City. Charcoal glowed in the barbecue pit; steaks marinated in oil, garlic, herbs and wine.

Kelso asked Dr. Cogswell, "Do you think some other anaesthetic

might work better? One of the hypnotics?"

Dr. Cogswell shook his head. "I'm sure I don't know. We're just prodding around in the dark."

"How about opium?"

"Opium? You mean—opium?"

"Yes. According to the lore, it turns the mind out to canter through flowering fields. Or perhaps mescaline?"

Dr. Cogswell shook his head doubtfully. "Opium and mescaline induce hallucinations, true, but the mechanism is purely cerebral."

Don sighed fretfully. "Doctor, how much effort would be involved in setting up a simulated-death tank at 26 Madrone?"

"Considerable effort, a great deal of money."

Jean turned away quickly, went to fork the steaks out over the coals.

Dr. Cogswell's eyes took on a thoughtful glint. "Our present equipment is obsolete. We've a dozen ideas which we'd like to introduce into a new system. However funds are short, and my colleagues would be delighted if I reported that funds were forthcoming."

"Okay," said Don. "You can take over the old dining room and kitchen—make any alterations you like."

Kelso asked, "You're seriously planning to try this artificial death, Don?"

"I don't plan to check out the new equipment, no. I want to see it tested backwards and forwards. If they kill and revive a dozen dogs, a dozen primates, including a few orang-utans, I might take a chance."

Kelso considered. "Isn't there any other way, that doesn't incur any risk?"

Jean looked hopefully over her shoulder.

"You name it, we'll try it."

Kelso rubbed his chin. "If we could train a chimpanzee—"

Don snapped his fingers. "A question we should ask: 'Are there animals in the after-world?' Excuse me; what would we train the chimpanzee to do?"

Kelso shook his head. "Darned if I know."

Don turned to Dr. Cogswell. "How long will it take you to set up a new tank?"

Dr. Cogswell considered. "A month and a half—in that neighborhood."

"Allow another two months for testing—say a total of three or four months. Right?"

Dr. Cogswell nodded.

"We can put the time to good use," said Don. "Kelso, maybe you can help us out here."

"I'll be glad to try."

"Granting my theory, that the mass unconscious generates an after-world in the matrix of mind-stuff, that the characteristics of a spirit are determined by his reputation; that notoriety and fame strengthen the spirit—conceding this to be true, it would benefit me to be planted in the public mind as a man of ingenuity and effectiveness."

Kelso nodded thoughtfully. "In other words—you want publicity?"

"Of a certain sort: as much as possible. The public should think of Donald Berwick as efficient, resourceful, insatiably curious, given to traveling to strange places, with a faculty for emerging unscathed. They must think of him as a lucky dare-devil who always wins."

"Well, well, well," said Kelso. He ran his fingers through his hair.



"I wouldn't dare work a hoax."

"You wouldn't need to," said Jean in a muffled voice. "If you just printed a few facts."

"Facts? About the Foundation here? I'd like to. I've been kicking myself for not getting pictures of the mass seance—which of course we could re-enact."

Jean shook her head. "I'm not referring to the Foundation . . . Tell him about your escape from the Chinese prison-camp, Don."

Don grinned sheepishly. "It's a long story. It'll take awhile."

"Let's hear it."

"The steaks are done," Jean said. "We better eat first."

Over coffee Don self-consciously settled himself in his chair. "I'm warning you, this is wild. At the time it seemed perfectly normal, but now—" he shook his head. "Once in a while I look at the photographs just to convince myself. I'll just give you the outlines; if you think there's anything in it, I can fill in the gaps."

"Toward the end of the Korean War I was captured, and for reasons best known to the Chinese shipped to a camp in Manchuria, near a town called Taoran, along with ten other Americans. We weren't listed with the Red Cross, and were never repatriated after the war. I think we were intended for super-special brain-washing, with an eye to making secret agents out of us."

"I was a prisoner for two years. We were brain-washed pretty thoroughly. I knew that if I got bored, I'd be lost, and to protect myself I learned Russian and Chinese. Studied hard at it—nothing else to do. They were glad to help, thinking the brain-wash was taking hold."

"The two years were tough. Six of the fellows died. Two were killed trying to escape, three from disease and undernourishment, one from a disciplinary beating. One day a Russian colonel visited the camp. He looked a bit like me . . . To make a long story short, I killed him, hid the body under the barracks, walked out in his uniform. In his jeep I drove to a place called Tsitsihar, on a feeder to the Trans-Siberian Railway."

"By this time there was hue and cry. I ditched the jeep, bluffed my way aboard a west-bound train. I stayed aboard two days and a night—past Chita, to a place called Ulan Ude, near Lake Baikal. Near Genghis Khan's Karakorum, as a matter of fact. Here my luck ran out—I was having visions of riding into Moscow and strolling to the American Embassy. I ran into a colleague, and gave him the wrong salute. I jumped off the train, ran through the yards. They were hot on my trail—a Keystone Cops sequence, but not funny. I jumped into the cab of a locomotive, pushed a gun into the engineer's back, and hid while the search-party ran past. We started back down the line to Chita, the fireman and the engineer convinced they were goners. I knew at Chita I'd be in trouble—but I couldn't see any way out. Twenty miles out of town I tied the engineer and fireman hand and foot, drove the locomotive into Chita. When we reached the yards I throttled down to about ten miles an hour, jumped out, let the train make its own decision. A hundred yards farther it ran into a yard engine."

"Here the story gets confused. I'll merely say I was chased through the streets of Chita. I hid in a bordello, stole a suitcase and

some civilian clothes, mingled with a group of eighty Russian engineers, on their way to Harbin in a truck convoy. I couldn't get away from them; I was put to work installing machinery in a cement plant. I knew nothing about it, but the foreman working below me did. I watched him work for three months, drew pay, then felt the breath getting hot on my neck.

"I stole a car, drove north to a town near the Siberian border—Kiamusze on the Sungari River. I hid aboard a barge, was taken to Tunkiang on the border. I stole a skiff, paddled across the river into Siberia, and rode a local bus to Khabarovsk. At Khabarovsk, after a month of intrigue, I managed to scrounge air passage to Sakhalinsk on Sakhalin Island. I walked south to Korsakov, sneaked on a fishing boat. When the fisherman appeared, I made him take me south. He set me ashore on Hokkaido at four in the morning. I went to the police station; they took me to an American Army camp. In brief," said Don, "that's the story."

Kelso asked in a hushed voice: "You're giving it to me free?"

"If it'll do any good. I've got a few photographs that I took along the way. It was a Russian camera, not too good, but—they're pictures."

Kelso examined the pictures. "If this doesn't make the Great Adventure series, my name isn't Robert Kelso."

"Wait till you hear the details," said Jean. "You've just got the outline."

Donald Berwick appeared on the cover of *Life* wearing a Russian colonel's uniform. He was depicted gazing at a wall-map of East Asia,

the path of his escape-route marked in black. His stance suggested capable masculinity; his acute hatchet-faced profile gave the impression of incisive virility. *Lucky Don Berwick* read the caption. He conspicuously carried a Polaroid camera, an incongruous note on which Kelso had insisted.

"If there's anything in this wild-est of all schemes," said Kelso, "I want pictures of it. You've got to appear in the after-life wearing a camera. Because I want pictures!"

"What good are pictures?" argued Head. "He can't mail 'em back."

"He's got to materialize. I want him to show himself, holding out photographs like a man selling postcards. I'll have a cameraman ready, and if Henry Luce doesn't weep for joy, I'll jump in the ocean."

"Will he dare print the pictures?"

"Could he resist?"

"Don't forget to emphasize somewhere that the camera is self-developing," said Don. "Also, that I always carry it loaded; otherwise it won't do any good."

Jean brought him the issue. "Here—look it over. You're famous."

Don groaned ruefully. "'Lucky Don Berwick.'"

"You should read the story."

Don turned to the article, read. "Oh, Lord . . . They make me out a combination of Mr. Moto and Tarzan."

"Excellent!" said Jean. "Just what you want."

Don looked up with an embarrassed grin. "I suppose it's what I was asking for. But now—I feel a fool."

"You've made an impression," said Jean. "Look. Here's an article

in the *Orange City Herald*—about 'Lucky Don Berwick, local hero!'"

Don read the article, grinning and blushing. "Here I'm a high school athletic prodigy, a war hero, a student who just barely missed a Rhodes scholarship, a petroleum engineer of uncanny wisdom." He ran his hand through his hair. "I feel the pressure of this contrived personality . . . It's gathering weight!"

Jean put her hand on his, squeezed. "It's not really as contrived as you might think. You really are like that."

"Rats."

"The picture is exaggerated—but it's you. Also—look at this." She pointed to a column on the other side of the page. Hugh Bronny's face stared challengingly forth at Don.

### **EVANGELIST ENTERS POLITICAL PICTURE**

#### **Bronny Declares for Governorship "Christian Crusade" as Third Party**

Hugh Bronny, evangelist and leader of what he calls the "Christian Crusade," today announced his candidacy for the governorship of California. At a press conference called at his Orange City headquarters he displayed a petition which he claimed bore the signatures of a million voters—enough to arouse attention and respect from both Democrats and Republicans. "I plan to make old-fashioned Christian principle the basis of government," declared "Fighting Hugh" Bronny. "The Christian Crusade is marching to bring the nation back to the fundamental idea of God—a clean white American God. We'll sweep the state this year; in two years

we'll send Christian Crusade Congressmen to Washington and in 1964 we'll have a Christian Crusade President in the White House!"

"The man's off his rocker," said Don.

"Surely there can't be any chance of Hugh becoming governor!" protested Jean.

Don shook his head. "I imagine there's still more sane people than lunatics in California."

"I keep thinking of Hitler," said Jean. "How the Germans voted him into power, on something of the same basis."

"Yes. It's a good analogy. Hitler appealed to the worst instincts of the Germans; Hugh does the same for us. 'Clean white God!'"

The doorbell sounded. Don went to the window. "Speak of the devil. It's Hugh!"

Jean started to the door, then paused. "What on earth can he want?"

"Let's find out."

Jean opened the door. With a laugh that was half-hysterical, she cried out, "Hugh—you've got a new suit!"

Hugh was wearing a double-breasted black coat with great padded shoulders, gray flannel trousers, long limp black shoes.

"What of it?" asked Hugh grimly. "I'm the next governor of the State, and I've got to look the part." He swung his eyes suspiciously from Jean to Don. "What's behind all this publicity you're getting? War hero! Fantastic saga of escape! It's dishonest."

"You're wrong," said Don.

"You mean to say that all that guff is true?"

"I mean that the facts speak for themselves."

"Come on," said Hugh scornful-

ly. "Let's have some details. I've known you too long, Don. You can't pull the wool over my eyes."

"It's the truth," said Don. "Take it or leave it. Do you think they'd print anything they couldn't verify?"

"Humph!" Hugh snorted. "Aren't you going to invite me in?"

"Hugh," said Jean, "you get crazier every time I see you."

Hugh's eyes glistened. "You're talking to a very important man, sister dear."

"What do you want?"

"Well—" Hugh hesitated. "As you know, I'm entering politics. I need money—you've got money that belongs to me. I want it."

"It doesn't belong to you and you won't get a cent," said Jean.

"What do you do with all that God-given money?"

"We're planning to build a laboratory and research center."

"For your Foundation of Atheistic Blasphemy?"

"Call it anything you like."

"What are you doing with all those animals at Madrone Place? Dogs, monkeys, apes?"

Don asked, "How do you know about these things, Hugh?"

"I keep my eyes open. What are you doing with them?"

"We are developing a new medical technique."

"You're killing them and bringing them back to life!"

"How do you know?" Don asked suspiciously.

"As I said, I keep my eyes open. I want to know why you're doing this? Are you going to try this unholy game with a man?"

"Haven't you asked enough questions?"

Hugh lowered his great head archly. "Just friendly interest."

"You're no friend of ours."

"I'm friend to all men. All God-fearing clean-thinking men."

"I don't fear anyone. So you're no friend of mine. Perhaps you'll do us the honor of leaving?"

Hugh serenely inspected the cuffs of his glossy new white-on-white shirt. "I came to visit my sister and my old home—which is my right. I came here taking valuable time, to get some information."

"If it concerns money," said Don, "you've got it. You don't get any."

"I'll sue."

"On what grounds?"

"You have admitted that it was my money."

"When was this?"

"You knew the oil was there. You asked me to accept half of the property, because you knew it was due to me."

"How did we know oil was there?" asked Don.

Hugh looked at him blankly.

Don said drily, "Evidently you concede that your father's ghost directed us to continue drilling."

"No," said Hugh without moving a muscle of his face. "Spirits of the departed worship God, or suffer in Hell. They do not concern themselves in earthly affairs. And however you learned of the oil, the money is mine. And now I need it." Jean said slyly, "Surely a candidate for governor has better things to do than stand on front steps wheedling money from his sister."

"It's my money," said Hugh doggedly. "If you think you'll keep it with impunity—you're wrong. Because I will fight back. Do you think I am called Fighting Hugh Bronny for nothing?" He fixed them in turn with a blue glare, then turned, stalked away.

Jean watched him go. "He's a different person, Don . . . It's some-

thing to do with changing his clothes . . . He's important now."

Don nodded. "He's building his own niche in the collective unconscious. Fighting Hugh Bronny . . . Let's go over to Madrone Place."

They drove across town, to the old frame building. From within came sounds of activity. An electric drill whined, a power-saw rasped through wood.

Don and Jean entered, walked through a new metal door into a large bare bright room. White-enameled cabinets lined one wall; opposite were oxygen tanks, an iron-lung, high-frequency electrical equipment. Through the floor came pipes, leading to a refrigeration unit in the cellar. A long glass-walled tank rested on a stainless steel box in the center of the room.

Don nodded to the tank. "There it is, Ferry to the after-world . . . What did Charon call his boat? Cerberus? No, that was the dog."

Jean's fingers were clenching his arm. Don looked down at her with a wry grimace. "What's the trouble?"

"I'm worried."

"It's Hugh. He's upset you."

"He's a maniac!"

"I suppose he is . . . Sometime I'm going to take an hour off and try to visualize the world as he sees it." He looked through a door into the next room. A man wielding an electric drill at the instrument panel nodded. He was about forty-five, round-bodied but sturdy, with a blond forelock hanging into his eyes. He finished drilling, came into the outer room.

"Doctor Clark," said Don, "I didn't expect to see you installing your own equipment."

"Just a small refinement," said

Dr. Clark. "Everything's working beautifully—better than we had hoped."

"Then there's no danger?" asked Jean anxiously.

"No fatalities since our first two days. Last night we held a chimpanzee under for an hour and a half. She's bright as a dime this morning."

"Then we're ready to roll on the big one," said Don.

Dr. Clark nodded. "We're ready to roll."

Don peered into the tank. "Make it comfortable, Doctor—I've a long way to go."

### 16. Plan for Destruction

THE room was the same; the night was two weeks later. Nine men and three women sat or stood in their assigned positions.

Doctors Clark, Aguilar and Foley stood beside the glass-walled tank. Godfrey Head, Howard Rakowsky, Kelso, Vivian Hallsey and a cameraman sat in chairs to one side of the door; to the other sat Jean and Ivalee Trembath. Doctor James Cogswell stood by the foot of the tank and with him was Donald Berwick.

Don wore a blue terry-cloth bathrobe. His face was composed but the skin at his jawline shone pale. He turned his head, met Jean's eyes. He smiled, muttered to Cogswell, crossed the room, took her hand.

"I can't help but worry," she whispered.

"There's nothing to fear," said Don. "The technique has been practiced on dogs and chimpanzees till they can do it in the dark."

"I've heard that when men return to life, they're not always—sane."

"Nothing like that's going to happen."

"Another thing—that article in today's paper. Won't it prejudice some people, alter the archetype?"

Don shrugged. "Perhaps, perhaps not. It makes the archetype more exactly me. It focuses a lot more attention on me, from people who before paid small attention . . ."

At this moment Fighting Hugh Bronny stood in the Orange City Auditorium, reading the article to seventeen thousand rapt followers. He leaned his gaunt body forward over the podium, spoke with the sly breathless relish of a dog stealing garbage. As he read he raised his head to glance across the auditorium. To his eyes the scene appeared as an over-exposed photograph—burnt by glaring lights, murred by shadows and smoky air, and the mosaic of pale faces was blurred, out of focus. He no longer thought of the audience as human beings. They comprised a unique substance, malleable as candle-wax, but with a responsive fiber that stimulated and excited him like a bath-brush on his long bony back.

Fighting Hugh Bronny read in triumph. He finished the article. The audience was silent; Hugh could sense the seventeen thousand pulsing hearts, the prickle and minuscule multitudinous shine of thirty-four thousand eyes. He felt a great glow of power. These people were waiting for him to tell them, to lead them; he could fix and form their minds, whip them back and forth like a fisherman dry-casting.

"I'll read the article again," said Hugh in a throaty voice. "And as I read, ponder the audacity of these hermeticimps." He looked

around his audience, raised his voice to oboe pitch. "These atheists." He peered into the blur of faces. "These nasty vandals, breaking a way even into God's own Heaven." He paused. Even the sibilant sound of breath and stirring cloth had stopped. There was as deep a hush as is possible when seventeen thousand people gather under a roof hung with bright lights.

Hugh's voice dropped an ominous octave. "If your blood doesn't boil like mine—then never call me Fighting Hugh Bronny, and never call yourselves Christian Crusaders."

He bent his head over the clipping and read.

### **LUCKY DON BERWICK TO PLUMB PSYCHIC REGION**

by Vivian Hallsey

"Three months ago Lucky Don Berwick was a man known to comparatively few people; today his name is on everyone's tongue. Wherever men and women get together, chances are they're talking about Lucky Don Berwick. Now comes news of an adventure to pale all the fabulous exploits in Berwick's fabulous life—if it works. Tonight at nine o'clock Donald Berwick will be killed. By every medical and legal definition he will be dead. His heart will be still. His lungs will pump no air. There will be no sign of life in Berwick's body; there will be no spark of life in Berwick's body; he will have passed beyond.

"At nine-thirty Drs. Cogswell, Clark, Aguilar and Foley of Los Angeles Medical Research Center will attempt to revive Donald Berwick by techniques conceived dur-

ing World War II, improved upon, and now perfected. At ten o'clock it is hoped that Lucky Donald Berwick will be lucky enough to be once more alive.

"What is the purpose of this experiment? Hang on to your seats, ladies and gentlemen; this is a jolt. Donald Berwick has volunteered to undertake the most daring exploration of his existence (although it's a journey all of us must make). He will endeavor to bring back a report on the land beyond the grave, if there be any."

Hugh looked up, carefully crumpled the clipping into a ball, cast it away with a gesture of revulsion.

"There, Christian Crusaders, you have it. You say with wrath in your hearts, God will punish these men. I say to you, God will certainly punish Donald Berwick and his kind! He has sent me—" Hugh became suddenly magnificent; he soared to his full height, an arm stretched high; his voice was a trumpet. "He has sent me! He has sent me as his strong right arm!" And in Hugh's voice was the sudden certainty, and every heart felt a pang, every throat contracted, gulped for air, expanded in a great guttural moan. "He has sent me!—and I will lead!—first against the Devil's Imp Berwick!—then against the vile forces that seek to befoul and destroy this dear America of ours! I can't tell you, go to 26 Madrone Place, make your wishes known. I can't urge, as I might wish, to tear that cursed haunt of evil stone from stone. No! They'd say I was inciting you to riot! I can't say that! No, brothers! All I can say is that's where I'm going! Now is the time for Christian Crusaders to ask themselves how to enforce the

will of God. By fighting? Or by reading in the papers of blasphemy and sacrilege? The address, brothers and Crusaders! 26 Madrone Place, I will be there!"

## 17. Madness Amok

DON looked at his watch. "Time grows short . . . I suppose I should be more alarmed, but I'm not." He grinned. "Just another dull evening."

Head said drily, "You're starting to take the exploits of Lucky Don Berwick seriously."

Don grinned. "It's hypnotic; I can't help it. The synthetic personality is taking me over." He caught Jean's half-alarmed glance, laughed. "I'll resist it."

Clark and Aguilar were giving the tank a final cursory inspection, looking without seeing, since the entire apparatus had been checked and re-checked during the day.

The cameraman walked here and there, taking photographs.

Don glanced around the faces, meeting the eyes that watched him with covert speculation. "Everybody looks comfortable." He prodded Cogswell's plump ribs. "Cheer up, Doctor. After all, it's me that's being killed."

Cogswell mumbled unhappily, "Do you think there'll be time for materialization?"

"I'll do what I can."

Dr. Foley touched Berwick's elbow. "Come on, Lucky; take the dive."

Don slipped out of the bathrobe. He wore the Russian colonel's uniform to identify himself as completely as possible with the archetypal image of himself in the mass mind. A Polaroid camera hung around his neck; at his hip a holster held a .45 army automatic.

"Take a good look," said Don. "And remember—Lucky Don Berwick! Concentrate on it! The 'Lucky' part especially." He stepped into the tank, stretched out.

Foley started a timer; Clark and Aguilar gave him intravenous injections in the right and left thighs, then the right and left shoulders. At one minute Foley threw a switch; motors under the tank began to whine. The glass was quickly frosted, Don's shape became indistinct.

At two minutes Clark and Aguilar repeated the injections, while Foley clamped a soft band around Don's wrist, looped a metal ribbon around his neck. Dials on the panel indicated pulse and body temperature. The pulse indicator quivered, sank: 60, 55, 50, 45; the temperature gauge hovered at 98.6 for thirty seconds, then began to dive. When it hit 90 degrees Foley threw in another switch; the motors below the cabinet sang.

Don was now unconscious. His pulse sank swiftly: 20—15—10—5 . . . It quivered to a stop. The temperature gauge commenced to plummet: 80°—70°—60°. Dr. Clark and Dr. Foley reached into the tank, flexed Berwick's legs, arms. The temperature dropped: 50°—40°—now far below room temperature.

Dr. Aguilar worked a knob; the motor sound declined in pitch. The temperature gauge moved more slowly, came to a halt at 34°.

Drs. Foley and Aguilar slid a glass cover over the tank, Clark opened a valve; there was a sound of pumps.

Dr. Cogswell turned to the spectators. "At this time—he's dead. The pumps are drawing the air out of his lungs; the tank will be

refilled by an atmosphere of nitrogen."

Foley reached through a port, rubber gauntlets over his hands. He put a bracket against the waxy temples, pressed contacts against various parts of Don's close-cropped scalp. Aguilar watched a dial, muttering, "No—no—no . . . No—no—nothing. No activity." Cogswell turned to the others. "He is now dead."

Kelso said, "Okay to take pictures into the tank?"

Dr. Cogswell nodded shortly.

Kelso motioned to the photographer.

Jean was looking at Ivalee Trembath. "Can you get anything?"

Ivalee shook her ice and silver head. "No . . . Not in here. There's too much infringement—disturbance."

"Want to leave the room?" Rakowsky asked her.

"Yes, please."

Rakowsky and Jean took her to one of the upstairs bedrooms. Suddenly conscious of noise, Rakowsky looked out the window. He touched Jean's arm. "The street—all of a sudden it's full of cars."

The cars crowded bumper to bumper along the street, glowing-eyed black fish. They roared and groaned and choked to a halt. The doors opened; men and women with twisted faces squeezed out, struggled and sidled to the sidewalk. They started to chant—off-key, off-beat. The tune suddenly emerged.

"Listen," said Jean.

"'Onward Christian Soldiers,'" said Rakowsky.

Jean shuddered. "It sounds weird—music from the future . . . What are they doing here? . . . A convention? A gathering?"



"A demonstration," said Rakowsky.

"An attack," said Ivalee Trembath.

The voices rose into the night, the faces looked up, pale as clamshells. A tall figure, larger and more definite than the faceless crowd, stalked to the door.

Rakowsky muttered, "I'm going to call the police."

Hugh's bony knuckles echoed on the door. "Open up, open up, in the name of the Lord God Most High. Open this cursed door!"

Jean suddenly came to herself to find Ivalee's hands clutching her. Ivalee was crying, "Jean! Jean! Don't!" Jean had a heavy earthenware vase in her hand; the window was open in front of her. She stopped struggling, put down the vase. "What a horror!" she whispered. "I would have killed him . . ."

The knocks were sounding again. "For the last time," blared Hugh's voice; then the door swung open. Godfrey Head's calm quiet voice rose up to them.

"I have called the police. You're disturbing a delicate scientific experiment. I advise you to leave before you get in serious trouble."

"Anti-Christ!" crackled Hugh's voice. "Stand aside." He put a great hand on Head's thin chest, pushed. Kelso stepped out on the porch. Hugh attempted to thrust him aside, Kelso swung a bony fist into Hugh's mouth, sent him reeling off the porch.

From the distance came the eery moan of sirens. It seemed to stimulate the crowd, to heighten their mood.

Hugh staggered 'around, faced them. His mouth oozed black blood, his shirt was befouled. "They have drawn my blood! In

my blood, forward! The time is now! Such a great fire we will kindle to carry us across the world! Onward, you Crusaders, you soldiers of Christ! With fire and sword—onward!"

The crowd roared, surged. Jean caught a horrifying glimpse of Godfrey Head being yanked by his necktie, flung down from the porch, disappearing under the dark rush.

An enormous baby-faced young man with side-burns wearing a leather jacket charged into the hall, clamped Kelso's arms; they fell heavily, Kelso on the bottom.

Hugh stalked forward, kicked. The young man jumped up, kicked too, again and again with booted feet.

Hugh looked about him, majestic, flaming-eyed. "Fire and sword!" came the cry behind him; and a woman who looked like a consumptive stenographer began keening "Onward Christian Soldiers!" And the baby-faced young man yelled, "Kill the devils! Kill the atheists!"

At the foot of the staircase the cameraman snapped pictures—one, two, three—then prudently retreated down the hall. Hugh ignored him. The four doctors came forward, so cool and inquiring that Hugh was momentarily taken aback.

"Will you kindly get that beastly mob out of here?" asked Dr. Aguilar testily.

Rakowsky marched forward. "I'm placing you under arrest. If you attempt to escape, I'll shoot you."

"'Escape'?" roared Hugh. "Stand aside!"

The doctors were disconcerted; the authority which served in hospital and laboratory had failed;

they suddenly became ordinary men. They fought.

In the living room there was a sudden crackle, a roar and babble of voices. Hugh sidled against the wall, fended off Dr. Aguilar with one great hand. Jean met him at the door; he slapped her face, backward, forward; she staggered back.

Hugh stood a moment in the doorway. Cogswell, his face twisted by fear, lurched forward. "Go away, get out of here!"

Hugh looked contemptuously from Cogswell to the tank. Donald Berwick lay cold, impassive, dead. The dials showed no pulse. The temperature was 34°.

Jean stood with her back to the tank; Ivalee Trembath gripped a chair to one side; to the other Dr. James Cogswell stared at Hugh like a hypnotized frog.

"Get out of here, Hugh," whispered Jean. "I'll kill you . . ."

Hugh's eyes blazed. "No one can stop me . . . I am the new Messiah!" He took a step forward. Cogswell, screaming hoarsely, charged. Hugh swung his long lank arm, slapped Cogswell's red cheek. Cogswell thumped to the wall, slid down to the floor. Hugh stepped forward.

Jean ran around behind the tank. Ivalee swung the chair. Somebody behind Hugh fended it off.

Jean slid back the glass cover, seized the automatic from Don's holster; the cold stung her hands. She aimed it, pulled the trigger. Nothing happened. Hugh laughed. He reached under the tank, heaved. The tank was bolted to the floor. Hugh grunted foolishly. Jean looked at the automatic, frantically fumbled, threw off the safety. She aimed, Hugh raised his foot, kick-

ed. Glass tinkled. Hugh reached, seized Don's cold arm.

Jean fired. The bullet struck Hugh's shoulder; he flinched, but seemed to feel no pain. He tugged at Don. With a sliding rush the body slid out on the floor.

Jean took a step forward, aimed, fired. Hugh clutched his abdomen in surprise. Jean pulled the trigger, firing steadily. Hugh's knees sagged. Blood suddenly spouted from a hole in his neck. His knees buckled; he toppled like a stricken mantis. Jean aimed her gun at the faces in the doorway, the shapes behind Hugh. They scuttled and ducked like beetles.

"Jean," said Ivalee, "the house is on fire."

"Fire!" came a cry from the hall. Ivalee went to Cogswell, tried to pull him to his feet. He lay limp, his breath coming in stertorous gulps. There was a shuffle in the hall, a curious lull. Then a sudden terrified sounding of feet, a scream, not so much of pain as terror.

Ivalee ran out into the hall; Jean saw the flicker on her face. For an instant the silver of her hair and ice of her face were alloys of gold. She turned back to Jean. "We can't get out the front."

Jean ran to the body of Donald Berwick. She knelt beside it, rubbed the cheeks. They were cold and damp from condensed moisture.

"Jean," said Ivalee gently, "Don is past all that."

"But Iva—we can do something—we've got to do something . . . The doctors—they could revive him . . ."

The flames poured into the room, bringing clouds of smoke. "We've got to get out of here," said Ivalee.

Jean looked down aghast at

Don's body. "Can't we—can't we—" she began in a tired voice.

Ivalee lifted her to her feet. "We can't help him now, Jean . . ."

"But—he's really alive, Iva . . . The doctors can bring him back to life! It's so horrible! I can't abandon him!"

"He's dead, Jean . . . The doctors could bring him back to life in the tank . . . With the right timing and their drugs . . . Don is dead, Jean. And so is poor little Cogswell."

"Dr. Cogswell—dead?"

"Yes, dear, Come, we can't stay any longer . . ."

By force she dragged Jean out into the hall. Sheets of flame blocked the way to the front door, and filled the rear hall.

"To the second floor," said Ivalee. "It's our only chance."

They ran up the stairs, pursued by hot smoke, stumbled into the front bedroom. Ivalee went to the window, while Jean leaned against the wall, numb with grief.

"The street is full of cars," said Ivalee. "The firemen are bringing hoses in from the corner. Listen, the mob is still singing. They don't know that Hugh is dead."

From one end of the street to the other the voices quavered, swelled in a chant of triumph. Jean tottered to the window. "Can we jump?"

"It's too far," said Ivalee.

Searchlights played on the house. Firemen hauled hoses down the sidewalk, running, shouting, pushing people aside. The nozzles were dry; no water came. The firemen turned, looked back along the line in rage, dropped the nozzles, ran back along the hoses.

"The service stairs," said Jean. "Maybe they're still open."

They ran to the rear of the

house. Behind them a gust of flame roared up the main staircase. Jean opened a door on the service stairs, closed it quickly on the wave of flames and blast of smoke.

Ivalee went to the back window, a heavy old stained-glass piece, tried to open it, without success.

"We're worse here than we were up front." They turned, looked back down the hall. The main stair-well acted as a chimney; flames were consuming the upper bannisters.

Jean picked up a chair, threw it at the stained glass. It broke, but lead held the pieces together. The air was very hot, and rasped their throats. Smoke seemed to seep from her lungs into her blood, into her brain. Vision swam in Jean's eyes, her knees began to sag.

Behind her she heard a sound, felt a blast of cool air; she felt a strong arm. She looked up. "Donald!" She could not hold on to her senses. Slowly she fainted; and when she awoke, it was four hours later, and she lay in the emergency hospital with Ivalee Trembath in the next room.

The nurse had no information to give her.

Three o'clock the next day she and Ivalee Trembath were discharged. They took a taxi to the old Marsile home across town. Two reporters were waiting. Ivalee sent them away; they were alone.

Jean stood hollow-cheeked, dry-eyed. She said, "Iva—just before I passed out—I saw him. Donald. Alive."

Ivalee nodded. "He carried us out."

"But how? He was—dead."

"I saw him too . . ." Ivalee sat down in a chair. "Let's see if we can find him—or get news . . ." She covered her eyes with a scarf.

Newspapers throughout the United States ran an account of the fire at 26 Madrone Place. The headlines read:

**LUCKY BERWICK  
RUNS OUT OF LUCK  
ENDS CAREER IN RELIGIOUS RIOT**

Sometimes in the same story, sometimes in a different column the death of Fighting Hugh Bronny was reported:

Members of the Christian Crusade revel in an ecstasy of religious excitement. Only an hour before his death Hugh Bronny exhorted his followers; "Rally to the Crusade; I am the new Messiah!"

According to the Reverend Walter Spedelius, Hugh Bronny's passing follows the Christ-pattern. "Christ died to show humanity its sins; Hugh Bronny died to lead us out of the mire to purity. He was a great spirit, a saint, a prophet, and we shall follow him in death as we did in life."

**18. Another World**

DONALD BERWICK lay down in the tank. He felt the weight of the camera on his chest, the mass of the automatic at his side. Overhead were the faces of Clark, Aguilar and Foley. He turned his eyes, glimpsed Jean through the glass. Then he felt the sting of the hypodermics, the clamp of the gauges. The motors whined below him; the air suddenly grew cold. He closed his eyes. When he tried to open them, he could not—already his muscles were numb.

He felt life leaving him, like the tide receding from a shallow

shore. He felt chilled, then suddenly warm and numb; then for a last transparent interval, freezing cold, through and through. Feeling left him and he died.

He had no feeling of leaving, no sensation of drawing away from his old frame. That was far away, and everything pertaining to it. Another phase of Donald Berwick existed, and it seemed always to have been. Now it came into its own.

From a new and strange perspective, Donald Berwick looked around the room. There were other shapes present; after a moment he recognized them. They were diaphanous, and stood swaying like seaweed, their feet anchored in small man-shaped pellets. One small cold pellet lay near his own feet, quiet and detached: the old Donald Berwick.

The new Donald Berwick felt a pang of pity, then took stock of himself. He had memory; he recalled the whole of his life, including fragments and details forgotten alive. Suddenly he realized there had been a great oversight in his preparations. Building the archetype "Lucky Don Berwick" in the collective unconscious, he had ignored a prime source of power. Who could know Donald Berwick with greater intensity than Donald Berwick himself? He examined his form: the uniform, the gun, the camera. All there. Wrist watch on his wrist. He examined it. His own watch the brand of which had never been publicized. Here was a measure of the difference between the strength conferred upon him by others and the strength derived from himself. He compared watch and camera. The camera was harder, brighter, solider. Twice as

hard, thought Berwick. Such was the measure.

Jean—he picked out the supple waving shape that was Jean. Her eyes were on him. This was Jean: composite of her own unconscious and that of all who knew her. Different in small ways from the Jean he knew, but not greatly . . . Iva-lee Trembath: her ice and silver composure was less noticeable; her mouth was soft and wistful. And the others—but later, later. First a picture to test the dream-camera. He set the aperture, aimed, snapped the shutter. Now—we'll quickly look over this after-life country—then back . . . How did time go? Fast or slow? He looked at the watch. The hands waggled, spun back and forth . . . Well, thought Don, evidently it's whatever time I think it is . . . Now, I'll step out into the street . . .

The walls went dim; he moved his feet, he stood in the street. It looked much as he recalled it; cars moved like phantoms, in and out of his vision unless he concentrated . . . The street was suddenly full of cars.

Don thought, now—up! If I am a thought, I travel like thought! And he passed through walls and floated in the dark sky. Below was the city; around him in all directions spread the carpet of lights . . . But this was not the city of reality; this was the composite of a myriad imaginations; the lights glowed softer, like crystal balls; the distance melted into nothingness.

If I'm a thought—then north! And mountains were below him, clad in dark pines, and ahead was a granite ridge, white and gray; and strangely it was early morning; Berwick stood on a peak and looked to all four directions.

China! He felt no movement; he was a thought; he was in China. This was not the China of reality, it was the composite China, the stereotype, or rather, the paradoxical set of stereotypes that made up the collective unconscious: the drabness of Communist China, the splendor of the old empire. He remembered his camera; he pulled the tab, looked at his first positive. Fair. Not bad. He tucked it into his pocket.

He set the aperture, photographed a pagoda, a comic-opera rickshaw. In the background were the hazy mountains and graceful willows of old Chinese paintings. Below, he could see other faces and shapes.

He thought himself to the ground. This was the old Bund, in Shanghai. He willed himself to see it; suddenly it took form and full solidity. He stood on the street. A coolie in flapping blue denim trotting toward him, halted, stepped aside, looked back.

Hey, thought Don, I have materialized . . . It seems easy . . . I'll return to Orange City and materialize at Madrone Place.

He thought: up. Drift slowly. Over the Pacific . . . He spied the moon. Should he dare? But of course, it was now his nature; he was Lucky Donald Berwick, who dared anything!

He thought: moon. And he was on the moon. Faster than light, as fast as thought. He stood on a silver and black plain; a scene from an imaginative painting.

He pulled the China photograph from the camera, aimed his camera at the moonscape. It occurred to him to wonder about his organic processes . . . Was he breathing? He felt pressure in his chest; then suddenly he materialized; he stood

on the stony reality of the moon's surface. His skin pulsed, his eyeballs bulged, cold struck up through the soles of his shoes. He had time for a brief thought: he was already dead; where did he go now when he died?

He let himself drift back into the unconscious. And the moon became the unconscious stereotype . . . Don scanned the sky. Mars!

Quick as thought, faster than light!

He stood on a dim red desert, the thin wind hissing past his ears. The sea-bottoms of ancient Barsoom? He turned his head; there in the distance was a ruined city—a tumble of white stone, a movement of the weird hordes of green warriors. He looked again; there seemed to be tall nodding vegetables behind, like dark dandelion fluffs . . . He took a picture, then thought of the canals . . . He stood beside a wide channel full of gray water. Ah! thought Don. It was proved! The canals of Mars did exist! He laughed at his own foolishness . . . All in the mind, all the collective unconscious. Was he on Mars at all, or was he merely a thought? He concentrated his attention; he stood on cold dry sands, under a black brilliant sky; and this was Mars indeed. How had he arrived? Were mind and universe one? Was the "real" world only another place of unreality, with mind and matter interacting and co-generating, like a man lifting himself by his boot-straps?

He glanced at his watch. What time was it? He had stepped into the tank at 9 o'clock. The hands read 9 o'clock. He had surely been dead ten minutes . . . The hands read 9:10. Or had it only been a single minute? And the time was 9:01. The time was whatever he

chose it to be. Very well then. Back to Earth. At this rate there would be ample time for exploration.

He was in space, diving for Earth—a glorious sensation of freedom! Don sang in exultation. It was fun to be dead! Earth—lovely familiar old Earth. There it was, laden with its two billion souls!

Was it Earth, or was it a thought? . . . For the first time it occurred to him to wonder: where were all the other souls? The spirits of all the dead? The angels? Jesus Christ? Mohammed and his houris? And as he thought he vibrated up into a fantastic golden land, flowered with white clouds. There indeed walked radiant winged beings, and there indeed, off in the distance, was a shining city of glass and gold; and there indeed was an effulgence, a blinding bright figure with a merciful face . . . Only an instant. Then an instant of a great garden, with lawns and flowers and marble pavilions, rows of cool cypress and poplar, turbaned shapes sipping sherbets, sublimely beautiful maidens . . . Don thought, there is no false religion; whatever Man believed, that was; whatever stage of abstraction Man could conceive, so far could he attain . . . Religion was, God was. But they were functions of Man; the mind of Man was the Creator.

Where was Molly Toogood, Ivallee's control? And the wandering spirits of the dead? . . . He saw Molly, a pleasant-looking woman: not as bright or hard as he was. She nodded. He sensed other shapes, flimsier than Molly. Where was Art Marsile? He looked around him, and—wonder of wonders—he stood in front of the old

Marsile house under the pepper trees. He walked up to the door. Art looked out. "Hello, Don. I been waiting for you. Got time for a chat?"

Don looked at the house, half-expecting to see Jean come running out, blonde and fresh and pretty. "No," said Art. "She's not here, Don. It's not her time yet. Maybe you'd better go check. There's trouble down there. Hugh as usual."

A flicker of thought. Don stood on the porch of 26 Madrone Place. In the street were numerous pellets of human beings, with their souls attached like frail balloons. All except one. Don recognized it: Hugh Bronny. Bronny's soul was tall, broad, and glowed with fiery intensity. The pellet of Hugh Bronny came up to the house; the soul—call it a soul, for lack of a better word—looked Don in the eye.

"Go away," said Don.

The soul opened its mouth, but the pellet squeezed shut the natural channel of its brain, ignored the message, knocked on the door.

Don thought himself into the laboratory. He watched while the Hugh Bronny pellet marched into the room; he tried to speak to the lovely wraith anchored in the Jean pellet, but she was too absorbed and upset.

The pellets moved, like shining quicksilver. He examined his body. Dead—but with the potential for life. He tried to slip his feet back into the cold pellet, but there was no purchase; he slipped away.

The Hugh Bronny pellet destroyed the Don Berwick pellet. Jean's wraith shimmered and twisted. Her body pellet seized the gun.

Don heard the shots as dull

clicks, stones tapped under water. Hugh's soul seemed to bulge, to sparkle, to take on mass. It was a monstrous ominous presence—it looked like Hugh, but it was strong and tough and muscular. The face was Hugh's face as Hugh must have conceived it: hard, fervent, unyielding.

The Hugh pellet was dead. The Hugh Bronny soul was free. It came toward Don. They looked eye to eye an instant.

Hugh reached out his powerful arms; Don knocked them aside. The contact was solid, but elastic, like two pieces of heavy rubber colliding.

Hugh moved off, and was gone. Don looked back to the house. It was in flames. The men who had worked with him—where were they? Cogswell—"Hello, Doctor," said Don to the pale soul which stood beside him. "I see you're dead."

"Yes," said the soul of Dr. James Cogswell. "It's very easy, isn't it?" The soul looked Don over with a trace of surprise. "My word, you look hard and strong! It's amazing."

"We worked enough for it," said Don. "Lots of people believe in me."

"Not too many believe in me!" said Cogswell in wonder. "Yet here I am!"

"You believed in yourself, didn't you?"

"Yes, of course."

"That's the most important."

"Interesting," said Cogswell. "This is a most fascinating place. Well, I must be off to explore."

"See you around," said Don.

The house was in flames. The wraiths of Jean and Ivalee Trembath shifted, as Jean and Ivalee ran around the house.

Jean's wraith looked at Don beseechingly.

"Of course," said Don gently. He dropped low, stood inside the room. He concentrated, materialized.

The women were drooping like flowers at twilight. The fire crackled behind him.

Jean raised her head, looked into his face with vast surprise. He lifted her—how light she was!—went to the window.

A problem! He was now a material body, and subject to the material laws of gravity . . . He could no more descend the thirty feet to the ground than could Jean.

Don thought himself to the roof. He materialized, tore down the ancient radio aerial, lowered it past the window, let it hang.

He materialized again inside the room, and now the smoke was thick. He wrapped Jean and Ivallee with drapes from the windows, looped the aerial first around Jean's body, lowered her to the ground. He thought himself down, released her, repeated the process with Ivallee Trembath. Then he carried the two of them through the back entrance to the alley.

He motioned to a man driving past in a car. The man ignored him. Don materialized in the seat beside him. The man's jaw dropped, strangled words came from his throat.

"Stop the car," said Don. "There are people hurt back there."

The man gasped out his acquiescence. Don put the two women in the back seat.

"Take them to the emergency hospital."

"Y-yes, sir."

Don relaxed his clutch on reality, expanded away into the after-life.

THE police failed as many Christian Crusaders as they could identify; the next day they were fined \$100 apiece, lectured by the judge and released. Tramping out of the court house they defiantly broke into their hymn, "Onward Christian Soldiers."

The Reverend Walter Spedelium attempted to rent Orange City Auditorium, but was turned down. He called a mass-meeting on the farm of one Thomas Hand, at the outskirts of the city. And there in a great square framed by eight bonfires, the Reverend Spedelius took up Hugh Bronny's torch.

"Verily, brothers," he cried in the brassy sing-song monotone of the evangelist, "our brother Hugh lived and died like a Christian saint—like a crusader of old! He gave all his earthly life to show us the way—just as many years ago Jesus Christ, yea, Jesus Christ, did the same—and brothers, I say unto you, Hugh Bronny, Fighting Hugh Bronny, is here with us tonight—and I say unto you, brothers, we won't let him down—we'll fight in the name of Jesus and Moses and the Prophet Elijah and the Prophet Hugh Bronny—and we'll fight till we bring the Kingdom of God to this wonderful land of ours . . ."

The Christian Crusaders were news; reporters and photographers were on hand, and the papers and news-magazines throughout the United States announced the new crusade. Segregationists, anti-Semites, America-Firsters thronged to ally themselves with the movement.

The opposition stirred. A dozen liberal organizations denounced the movement, editorials appeared



in the great newspapers, bitterly critical of Fighting Hugh Bronny, Walter Spedelius and the Christian Crusade. In the tumult Lucky Don Berwick was almost forgotten. He was no longer news.

## 20. Duel of the Spirits

IN THE region beyond time, Donald Berwick lived and moved. He became aware of a tug, a pull; and since he was no more than a thought, dwelling in the massive composite of all the thoughts that ever were, he responded.

Ivalee Trembath was calling him. She and Jean sat in the living room of the old Marsile house.

Don looked into the face of the swaying soul that stood with feet anchored in Ivalee's body-pellet. The soul spoke, "Release me, Donald, and take my place for a while, and I'll roam; and when you want to leave, I'll be back . . ."

It was strange speaking with Ivalee's mouth, hearing with her ears. Sight and muscle coordination, at the moment, seemed impossible.

"Hello, darling Jean," said Don.

"Hello, Don. How are you?"

"I'm very well. Things over here are just as we expected. I've got pictures for Kelso."

"Don—I miss you terribly."

"I miss you too, Jean . . ."

"You helped us out of the fire. You materialized."

"Yes."

"Is that hard?"

"It wasn't then. I was at the height of my intensity. I'm not so strong now."

"I don't understand, Donald."

"I don't either. The stronger I am, the easier it is for me to materialize."

"Are you weaker—because peo-

ple aren't thinking about you so much?"

"Yes. I believe so. More or less."

Jean's voice quavered. "Then Hugh must be very strong."

"Yes," said Don. "I've seen him. He glows with strength. You'd never recognize him."

"Is he—as wretched as he was on Earth?"

"He's different. He's as evil. But the smallness, the petty detestable part of Hugh has dwindled. Hugh is now something magnificently evil."

"What happens when he sees you?"

Don paused, then said matter-of-factly, "He tries to kill me."

"Kill you!"

"Sounds odd, doesn't it? I'm already dead. But that's how it works."

"How can he kill you? You're immaterial—a thought!"

"A thought can drown another thought out; reduce it to oblivion, make it something furtive and despised."

"Hugh is trying to do that—to you?"

"Yes."

Jean was silent a moment. Then: "You know what's going on down here?"

"Not altogether. I've been—out, away."

Jean explained, and Don was silent for several minutes.

"Don," asked Jean diffidently, "are you still there?"

"Yes. I'm thinking."

There was another minute of silence. Jean sat tense, watching the limp form of Ivalee, her hands twisting and knotting a ribbon.

"Jean."

"Yes, Don."

"The battle is between a pair of ideas. Hugh represents one, I rep-

resent another. I must fight Hugh. Kill him. Kill the idea of Hugh."

"But Don—are you strong enough?"

"I don't know."

"How can you fight?"

"Just as on Earth. Tooth and nail."

"If you lose—will I ever see you again?"

The voice was fading, indistinct. "I don't know, Jean. Wish me luck. I can see Hugh now . . . He's coming."

Ivalee Trembath twitched, mumbled, then lay quiescent.

There was a sudden roar in the room, like a train passing through. The roar subsided to a rumble, faded.

"Iva," said Jean gently. "Iva."

No response. Jean listened. The air was very still, but seemed to be stiff and it crackled like cellophane.

Jean slowly got to her feet, went to the telephone.

Hugh Bronny stood over Donald Berwick. They were on a featureless expanse, a plain without end; it might have been the Ukrainian Steppe, or the perspective of a surrealist painting.

Hugh was wearing his black double-breasted coat. His enormously muscular arms filled out the shoulders. His eyes blazed like electric arcs, his face was the size of a shield; his legs were knotted with strength.

"Donald Berwick," said Hugh, "I've hated you in life and I hate you here in the after-life."

"You could not help but hate me," said Don, "because you're the personification of hate—here as you were on Earth."

"No," said Hugh, "I was a great religious leader; now I am a saint."

"Words can't conceal facts."

Hugh took an ominous step forward. "I will expunge you, you miserable sick pap-mouthed chicken."

Jean telephoned Godfrey Head. "Godfrey—I must see you."

"Sorry, Jean, can't make it . . .

I'm bound for a meeting of the Faculty Association. Two of the University Regents have become Crusaders; can you believe it?"

"Godfrey—I've just talked to Donald. He's fighting Hugh Bronny right now. We've got to help him."

The telephone line buzzed with silence. Then: "Help him? How?"

"Let me come with you to your meeting . . . I take it you're all anti-Bronny?"

Godfrey Head snorted. "Naturally. But what can you do?"

Jean laughed bitterly. "I'm several times a millionaire. There's a lot I can do."

Hugh snatched out, caught hold of Don's shoulder. Fingers dug into flesh like tongs into a bale of hay.

A sword, thought Don, and he held a sword. He swung, hacked; the blade clanged against Hugh's neck. Hugh reached out his other, seized the blade, snatched it from Don.

"I will chop you to small atoms," he chanted. "I'll smear you into smoke, I'll blow your memory out of time . . ." He lashed out with the sword. Don sprang back; the blade hissed past his chest, leaving a red groove.

He thought sword, and held in his hand another sword.

Hugh bellowed out a gust of mocking laughter. He took a great stride forward, lashing with his sword.



The phantoms fought their bitter fight unseen, unknown.

Godfrey Head diffidently addressed assembled members of the University Faculty Association.

"A friend of mine wishes to speak to the meeting. I want to warn you in advance: be prepared for a surprise. What you will hear may strike you as unprecedented and unsettling. But, confound it, we presume ourselves an intellectual elite, and we've got to shoulder the responsibilities which go with the status—or else admit ourselves to be fast-talking four-flushers." His mild face glowed; he glared at the surprised audience as if they had challenged him.

"This meeting was called to establish a position in regard to the Christian Crusade. What Jean Berwick will tell you bears on the subject." He motioned Jean up to his side. "This is Jean Berwick. Listen carefully to what she says, and think carefully, because I think a time has come for us, and all other intelligent people, to make a choice."

Jean stood up on the podium, frail and intent. "My name is Jean Berwick. My husband Don Berwick died recently, in what might be called the first armed aggression of the Christian Crusade. He is dead, but he is still fighting—in spirit." She smiled wanly. "In spirit, he needs our help."

"I have a proposal to put to you—one of far greater scope than any of you had expected to hear tonight. Why do I come to you? Because you are the first large group of influential and intelligent people I could reach, and because you understand the implications of the Christian Crusade. I want to crush the Christian Crusade, grind it into oblivion. It is not enough to jail one or two demagogues; the Christian Crusade is an idea. We

must organize a counter-idea, stronger and more inspiring, to smother it.

"Exactly what is this so-called Christian Crusade? It is hate, enforced conformity, authoritarianism, race bigotry. Are the Crusaders Christian? They make a rite of submission to a malignant and vengeful God, who rewards his friends like a ward-boss and sentences his opponents to torture in Hell. Christ would turn away in disgust from this God. What is the counter-doctrine? A crusade for human dignity and the right—the obligation—to non-conformity, as passionate as Bronny's crusade for orthodoxy! A declaration of independence from religiosity, the assertion that men are masters of their own destinies. These are the issues: human values against superstition; pride and confidence against humility at the feet of idols, real or imaginary; civilization against barbarism; faith in man against faith in theosophical dogma.

"What do I expect of you here tonight? I want you to rise to the challenge that our knowledge of right and wrong has set before us. I want you to endorse this manifesto I have outlined, to set it forth as a standard to which proud and intelligent men and women can rally.

"We are on the verge of space; already we can tap unlimited energy. There is the outer threat of Communism, less dangerous than this internal threat symbolized by the Christian Crusade. These are problems and opportunities. How shall we meet them? With the mill-weight of the past around our necks? Or as proud, indomitable, self-reliant men of the future?

"What is your answer? If

you're with me clap . . . If you're not—" she smiled. "Then you can hiss."

She waited. There was ten seconds silence, in which the churn of minds was palpable; honest enthusiasm tugging at conventional caution.

There was a sudden sound of clapping. It grew in volume. It filled the hall.

Jean relaxed against the podium. "I am not speaking to you. I'm not an orator. It's Donald Berwick speaking through me. If Hugh Bronny symbolizes the past, then Donald Berwick is the symbol of the future."

Hugh laughed at Don. "Strike. You cannot cut me. Your sword is dull."

Don looked. The sword had turned to dull gray pewter. He saw a glint, ducked. Hugh's blade whistled over his head.

Gun, thought Don, and he held his .45 automatic.

Hugh's sword became a monstrous revolver, shooting yellow projectiles the size of hand-grenades.

Don aimed, fired.

There was discussion. A brisk sharp-featured man said, "Do you propose that we issue a Manifesto of Atheism? We can't do that. There are many Christians among us, as well as Moslems, Jews, a few Buddhists, Orthodox Hindus—in addition to the free-thinkers, Unitarians, agnostics, and atheists."

"No," said Jean, "I don't ask you to endorse atheism, or any other belief. Because I don't know. There's an elemental mystery to the universe: The why of things. Everyone is free to speculate. I

speak not for atheism, but against compulsory theism, or compulsory dogma of any kind."

"I see. In that case you have my whole-hearted support."

Godfrey Head addressed the chairman. "I move that we adjourn the meeting, that we immediately convene as the Society for Intellectual Freedom—with the purpose of drafting the Declaration Jean Berwick has proposed."

Don pulled the trigger of his gun. The bullet smashed into the barrel of Hugh's great weapon. The projectile buzzed past Don's ear, exploded somewhere behind.

Hugh sprang forward, they grappled. One enormous arm circled Don's throat. Hugh pressed his weight against Don, trying to force him over backwards.

Don swung up a desperate fist, struck Hugh on the nose. He felt the cartilage crush; then Hugh's weight pushed him back. He landed with a bone-shaking jar. Hugh's hands went to Don's throat.

"I'll tear your head off," hissed Hugh. "I'll strip you arm from arm . . .

The Society for Intellectual Freedom became known to the nation; to the world, on the following day. It was bitterly attacked by certain of the organized religions; by the Christian Crusade in particular, and hailed with joy by people uneasily aware that anxiety and uncertainty had driven them to accept doubtful dogma.

And who was Jean Berwick? The wife of Lucky Don Berwick—who had been killed resisting the Christian Crusade!

By a tremendous racking effort, Don threw Hugh off him. They

rose to their feet, stood facing each other. Hugh had lost something of his over-powering confidence, but he was possibly more ferocious. Don grew larger, more solid.

They both glowed with a cool blue light. The background had shifted; they stood in a valley between two ranges of low black hills.

"Hugh," said Don, "I could kill you with my hands . . . But I prefer to demolish you with my mind."

Jeffrey Hannevelt, President of the Unitarian Association, executive chairman of the Society for Intellectual Freedom, told reporters, "We could take Walter Spedelius, Casper Johnson, Gerald Henrick to court—we might get them indicted for conspiracy. But that's not enough. We've got to discredit them. We're modern men, in charge of our own destiny. We're moving into a new era of civilization, setting up a whole new culture-pattern. It's up to us how it'll turn out. How do we want it? The kind of world men dream and hope for? Or a world of groveling subservience to authority—political, religious, or otherwise? You know what the answer is. We can advance to a state where humanity proudly accepts and asserts responsibility for its own actions, where each man is proud to be a free-willed individual."

"Would you say, sir, that it's a case of rational versus the irrational? Good versus bad?"

"It's too big to compress into words," said Jeffrey Hannevelt. "To call it science against superstition would be about as close as you could come."

Hugh thought a war-club into his hands, and leapt forward to

smite. Don retreated, thinking a glass dome over Hugh.

The dome swiftly contracted, fitted around Hugh, then would go no more. There was a struggle; Don thinking another stronger glass skin around Hugh, Hugh thinking it away. The glass cracked, split. Hugh stepped out like a moth from the chrysalis.

Hugh thought a flame-thrower; in the split-second before the flame reached him, Don thought a metal wall. The flame spattered back.

Only Hugh's upward glance warned Don; he thought himself a mile back; a lump of iron, the size of a small asteroid, crashed into his footsteps.

On Hugh's right hand, Don conceived a mass of uranium shaped like a bucket; on Hugh's left hand he conceived a mass shaped like a plug. They darted together; Hugh saw them coming; they did not appear to be aimed at him. He stepped back with contempt.

The pieces joined. Don thought himself twenty miles away.

Thought is faster than radiation; thought is faster than any shock-wave. The great glow dazzled Don's eyes; otherwise he was unharmed. Where Hugh had stood was a glowing crater.

## 21. What Is Reality?

ON THE terrace of Godfrey Head's beach cottage ten miles south of Santa Barbara, Jean, Ivalee Trembath, Godfrey Head and his wife, Howard Rakowsky sat quietly. It was a warm evening. The Pacific lay flat and calm, glistening under a half-moon.

"Did you see that?" said Jean suddenly.

Godfrey Head looked around the sky. "What? Where?"

"A flash! A great light!"

"I didn't see anything," said Head.

Rakowsky shook his head; Ivalee said nothing.

"Might have been an atom-bomb explosion in Nevada."

The telephone rang; Godfrey Head answered. They heard his voice: "How many? . . . Really . . . That's wonderful. It looks as if we did some good after all . . ."

He returned to the terrace. "That was Claiborne in Los Angeles. The Christian Crusaders put on a monster rally out in Gardena."

"Really?"

"Three hundred and twelve people showed up. There's also a warrant out for Spedelius. Misappropriation of funds."

"I guess that does it," said Rakowsky. "Funny how these movements come up—and seem so important and critical. Then suddenly when they break like a balloon, when they're past, how weak and paltry they seem in retrospect."

Godfrey Head asked Jean, "What of the parapsychological research?"

"We'll get started up again. As soon as possible. We've barely scratched the surface. What is mind-stuff? That's the basic question. Did it exist before man, before life on Earth? Did intelligence adapt itself to a pre-existing ocean of mind-stuff, or did intelligence generate mind-stuff? If there is intelligent alien life on other planets, do they use the same mind-stuff, as we do? How do the material processes of the brain engage the non-material processes of the mind-stuff? What is the mechanism? Where's the linkage?"

Rakowsky held up his hand.

"Enough to keep us busy several months right there."

"Of course it won't be the same . . . I don't want to go back to Orange City . . . Maybe we can build a research center somewhere up here, along the ocean . . ."

She rose to her feet. "Excuse me, I'm going to take a walk down the beach."

"Like some company?" asked Head.

"No thanks."

They watched her go. "Poor kid," said Rakowsky. "She's gone through a lot."

Ivalee smiled. "Something very wonderful is about to happen to Jean."

Jean sat on a half-buried length of timber. She looked up—a man stood before her. She jumped to her feet, stepped back.

"Don't be frightened, Jean."

The blood was pumping in Jean's ears. "I'm not frightened."

He took her hands, kissed her. His face felt warm; there was a stubble of beard on his cheeks.

"Donald," she sighed. "You feel real."

"I am real."

"I wish you were, Donald . . ."

The surf roared quietly; the stars fulfilled the ancient patterns. Her voice sounded thin and far away.

"Sit down. I'll explain. It won't take long."

She slowly sat on the log. "How—how long can you stay?"

"Till I die."

"But—you're already dead."

"And now I'm alive again."

"Don, don't tease me, if it's not true."

"It's true. I died. I was a thought—hard and intense and definite. I materialized. Remem-

ber? But I was not hard and definite enough—not true matter. I slipped back. Then as the thought lost intensity I became weaker. Until I fought Hugh Bronny. At first he was very strong—a giant.”

Jean nodded. “At the same time we were fighting the Crusaders—and they were strong at first. But we won—just tonight.”

“Tonight I killed Hugh Bronny.”

Jean sighed, laughed wearily. “A dead man being killed.”

“He’s not utterly destroyed. Because the cycle goes on in the after-life. What’s left of Hugh is the thought of his thought—a poor shambling wraith.”

“I don’t understand, Donald.”

“I don’t either . . . But suddenly I was strong—intense as I never had been before. More than anything I wanted to be with you. And here I am.”

“Are you real? All of you? Not just your outside feel and look?”

“Look at me—touch me.”

She did. “Mightn’t it be—well, illusion?”

“I am real. Perhaps because it’s the simplest way. A material body must move; what’s more rational than muscles to move it? Material muscles. And what more rational than material blood to nourish the muscles? And what’s more rational than functioning material lungs and a functioning material stomach to feed the blood? Is there an easier way to simulate a normal human being than to be a human being? There’s nothing mystic or occult involved . . . It’s common sense. Carbon atoms crystallize into a diamond, not because a diamond is pretty or because a diamond has occult significance—but because that’s the way carbon atoms fit together. The simplest way. The same way with me.”

“Don—can you stay here—forever?”

“Until I die, I’m material now.”

Jean looked up the beach, toward the lights of the beach-cottage. “Shall we go back—and tell the others?”

“Let’s not . . . Where’s your car?”

“Up in the road.”

“Let’s go.”

“But Howard—Godfrey—Ivallee—”

“We’ll telephone from Orange City.”

Jean laughed softly, patted his cheek. “Shall I get my suitcase?”

“You’d better get your check-book,” said Don. “I should have materialized a satchel-full of twenty-dollar-bills.”

“That’s counterfeiting,” said Jean. “How are we ever going to explain this?”

“My return? Lucky Don Berwick staggered out of the burning house, had an attack of amnesia, finally came to himself.”

“It’ll have to do.” She turned away. “Can I trust you not to dematerialize?”

“Yes . . . I’ll wait in the car.”

Five minutes later she returned to the car with her suitcase. “Donald?” She looked into the car. “Don! Where are you?” A sudden terrible fear loomed in her brain.

“Right behind you. What’s the trouble?”

“Nothing.” She got in, slammed the door. “I was just afraid.”

“There’s nothing to be afraid of.” He started the motor, turned on the lights, and the car moved slowly along the driveway, out to the highway, and turned south toward Los Angeles. It accelerated; the tail-lights became a pair of red dots, a glimmer, and then were lost.

**THE END**



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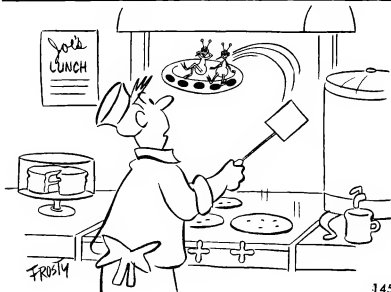
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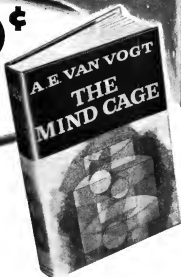
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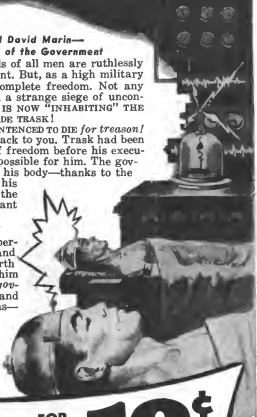
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